

SWĀMĪ SHRADDHĀNANDA
His Life and Causes



Swami Shraddhananda

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J. T. F. JORDENS

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To Chris, Rani, Justin, and Tara

Preface

After having written a work on Swami Dayananda Sarasvati I decided to continue my study of the Arya Samaj from the eighties into the third decade of the twentieth century. Swami Shradhdhananda seemed to be a most appropriate figure to focus upon. He not only played a leading role in the new developments inside the Samaj, and became the major initiator of a new concept of Arya education, but he also emerged as a key figure in Congress politics and in the *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movements of the twenties. Thus he played a major part in the great transformation that changed the social composition of the Arya Samaj, and brought its members into both Congress politics and the movement for Hindu *sangathan*. The study of the Swami's views also brings to light the particular way in which he and many of his followers and admirers viewed these times, a point of view readily available in the vernacular literature, but difficult to extract from official or English sources.

A number of institutions provided substantial help in the preparation of this work. The Australian National University granted me leave to pursue my research in London, Cambridge, and India, and the University Library helped in acquiring necessary publications. I also thank the staff of the British Museum, the India Office Library, and the Cambridge University Library.

The materials for this study were mostly collected in India. I am grateful for their assistance to the staff of the National Archives of India, the Nehru Memorial Library, the Gandhi Memorial Library, the Har Dayal (Hardinge) Library, and the libraries of Vidyajyoti and the Cambridge Brotherhood. Naturally, many rare materials came from the libraries of Arya Samaj institutions, where I was always given the kindest welcome and the most generous assistance. I am particularly indebted to the staff of the Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, the Gurukul Kangri, the Naya Bans Arya Samaj, the Punjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, and the Delhi Arya Pratinidhi Sabha.

To some friends I owe special gratitude. First of all I need to mention two grandsons of Swami Shradhdhananda: Shri Jayant

Vachaspati gave me copies of some important speeches of the Swami in the original Hindi, and Shri Satyakam Vidyalandkar let me read the manuscript of his own biography of the Swami before its publication. In Jullundur I was welcomed and helped by Shri Virendra, editor of the *Daily Pratap*, and Shri Om Prakash. Very special thanks must also go to the authorities of Gopichand College, Abohar, who presented me with some valuable rare volumes, and who were perfect hosts. Professor Rajendra Jigyasu of that College took great pains to share with me the riches of his private collection, to donate some very rare volumes, and to keep looking for materials and sending them on to me. My feeling of gratitude is enhanced by the memory of the pleasant time I spent with his family.

In my own Faculty of Asian Studies, Professor A.L. Basham was ready as ever with his advice and took time off to read some of my drafts. Miss Mary Hutchinson's editorial assistance was much appreciated, as was the constant good humour of Mrs Margaret Tie in producing an impeccable typescript. I also owe a very special thanks to two of our Ph.D. students, Mr M.S. Akhtar and Mr I. Haq, who have generously given me invaluable assistance in the reading and translation of Urdu texts.

The views expressed in this book, however, are entirely my own and full responsibility for any errors or oversights lies with me.

As always I enjoyed the editorial assistance of my wife Ann-Mari who took time off from her own writing to listen to or read my drafts. Without the good health, good humour, and patient understanding of my children, this book would have been much longer in the making. I give them special thanks by dedicating this book to them.

Australian National University
Canberra, 1980

J.T.F. Jordens

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*All photographs: courtesy Dr Ranvir Puri, Director, Gandhi Memorial Museum, from his personal collection.

Note on Diacritics and Translations

The use of diacritics has been strictly limited to two cases: where a Hindi, Urdu, or Sanskrit word is used in the original, and for the titles of the works in these languages. For the transcription of *devanāgarī* words I have adopted the system used in M. Monier-Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* with a couple of simplifications: *sh* is used for both palatal and cerebral sibilants; the dots under the cerebral consonants have been omitted; I have also dispensed with the dots under the final letters *h* and *m* and with the upper sign of the *ñ*. For the transcription of Urdu words, I have generally been guided by John T. Platts' *A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi, and English*.

The translations from Indian languages that feature in the work are all my own. I must, however, acknowledge the considerable help given by M.S. Akhtar and I. Haq with translations from Urdu.

Abbreviations

- AUTO** Autobiography of Shraddhananda, published under the title *Kalyān Mārg kā Pathik*, New Delhi (1924)
- BIO** Satyadeva Vidyānankar, *Swāmī Shraddhānanda*, Delhi, 1933.
- HIST I** Indra Vidyāvachaspati, *Ārya Samāy kā Itihās*, vol. I, Delhi, 1957.
- HIST II** The same, volume II.
- INCO** Swami Shraddhananda, *Inside Congress*, Bombay, 1946.
- INDRA** Satyakam Vidyānankar and Avinindra Vidyānankar, *Indra Vidyāvāchaspati*, Delhi, 1965.
- PAPS** Bhīmasena Vidyānankar, *Ārya Pratimādhī Sabhā Panjāb kā Sachitra Itihās*, Lahore, 1935.
- PITA** Indra Vidyāvachaspati, *Mere Pitā: Samsmaran*, Delhi, 1957.
- SVNP** *Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers Published in the Punjab.*
- SVNUP** *Selections from the Newspapers Published in the United Provinces.*

Introduction

In the annals and in the veneration of the Arya Samaj the stature of Swami Shraddhananda is second only to that of the founder himself, Swami Dayananda Sarasvati. This is evidenced by his innumerable biographies and by the great importance and popularity of the celebrations that commemorate his birth and death. Swami Shraddhananda's influence ranged far beyond the ambit of the Arya Samaj into national Hindu movements and national politics. His memory, however, has suffered like that of Dayananda by the absence of serious scholarly publications on his life and work. The many extant biographies are but summaries and rehashes of the voluminous Hindi work written by a disciple, Satyadeva Vidyalkar, in 1933, which is now looked upon as his standard biography, notwithstanding the great number of sources that were not tapped by him.

These sources are scattered across North India to an unbelievable degree. Even the institutions most closely connected with his name, from which one would expect a special solicitude for the preservation of all historical documents and books written by the Swami or dealing with his life, have been found to possess today only tiny fragments of his own publications. In fact, important sources are still being lost every year through neglect. Thanks to the generous assistance of many friends from the Arya Samaj, who are acknowledged in the preface, I was able to collect in one form or another practically all the publications of the Swami, and many vernacular works that throw light on his activities.

No one can doubt that Swami Shraddhananda played a significant part in various chapters of the history of South Asia between 1880 and 1926. His first public role as leader of the 'radical' party of the Panjab Arya Samaj was decisive in the evolution of that group, which came to exert great influence on Panjab politics. His establishment of the Gurukul Kangri, giving rise to the spread of Gurukul-type schools across North India, cannot be ignored by the historian of vernacular education. In 1919 the Swami assumed the leadership in Delhi of the first Gandhian national Satyagraha in protest against the Rowlatt Acts, and then became an active

member of the National Congress high command. He was one of the driving forces of the pan-Hindu *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movements of the early twenties, movements so important in the history of Hindu-Muslim relations. And, finally, his endeavours for the uplift of the untouchables give him a special place in the social history of modern South Asia.

In his attempts to understand all these various segments and movements in modern South Asian history, the historian rightly looks for local, provincial, and national social and economic pressures. He explores the basic needs of caste-groups on the move or under pressure, and the difficulties engendered by the fluctuations of an economy dominated by the vagaries of nature and of imperial exploitation. He sifts through the voluminous documents of the British Raj to uncover the processes of decision-making by its officers, high and low. The description and combination of all these elements of social, economic, and imperial pressure, give body and meaning to the various political moves and counter-moves they engendered, and gradually build up a picture of the broad history of modern South Asia. Ideologies on a grand or small scale are often considered relatively unimportant, because they are seen as little more than the rationalization of much more basic drives. In fact, not infrequently they appear to have been just that.

But within that same march of history there were also personalities principally driven by ideological or religious motivations which cannot be brushed aside as mere rationalizations. It does not matter if one considers their ideology simplistic, or if they were not great original thinkers. The fact is that their impetus had its source in convictions and ideals. When such people remain among the multitude, they do not surface in history. But when they themselves assume leadership and participate in crucial social and political movements at a high level of command, then some of them learn the different game of politics and compromise, and also of rationalization. But some do not: they stand out in a strange light, because they move in a world to which they do not seem to belong. However, they are part of the story and the clarification of their ideas and actions adds to the understanding of the period as a whole.

Shradhananda was such a man. From early manhood when, after a wasted youth, he became a convert to the Arya Samaj, the

basic drives of his life were religious. During his youth, migrating with his father across North India, he had been largely insulated from caste and other social pressures. As Mahatma Munshiram, the *vānaprastha* (forest-dweller) without a home, and even more as Swami Shraddhananda, the *sannyāsi* free from social and worldly ties, he was a lone individual, driven by visions and passionate beliefs. He could not play the chess-game of compromise so essential to politics. This made him a strange figure in the corridors of the Congress high command, and even among the leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha. But as a personality with great charismatic impact on many people, his influence on the movements he participated in cannot be minimized.

This biographical study attempts to do justice to Swami Shraddhananda as a man inspired by ideals and sometimes impossible dreams in the midst of his more pragmatic colleagues and collaborators. It looks at the movements of the period through his eyes by exploring his writings and messages, and integrating into the story the rich deposits found in vernacular literature written by those who admired and followed him, and also by those who feared and despised him. Thus this study deals not only with the activities of the Swami, but also with his own personal and frequently dramatic view of his times, a view he constantly sought to communicate to anyone prepared to listen. This 'subjective reality' may seem unimportant to some, but, as Kenneth Jones rightly pointed out, social and cultural history is created out of the interaction between what happened and what people believed happened, and the latter is sometimes more relevant than the former.¹ In this way it is hoped that this study will throw some new light upon facets of the variegated scene of modern South Asian history.

CHAPTER I

The ups and downs of a misspent youth 1857-83

'The struggle of darkness and light'

'The Child is father of the Man'. In nineteenth century India this growth to manhood was one that took a long time, even if marriage took place at an early age. Moreover, these twenty-odd years were mostly spent within the fairly tight circle of family, caste, region, and often sect. No wonder that the full-grown Gandhi can only be fully understood by the study of his Vaishnavite vaishya background in Kathuwar,² and that many ideas of Swami Dayananda originated in his youth as a Shaivite brahmin of that same region.³ The adage holds true also for Swami Shraddhananda, but his youth was a totally different one. Although he belonged to a Panjabi family, the Panjab only became his adopted homeland after he had grown to manhood. Born in the turbulent years of the Mutiny, he spent the first fifteen years of his life following his father from one police station to another in quick succession. There was, therefore, no Panjabi or caste tradition that dominated and directed his development. The only continuing influence was that of his father, who had a strong impact on his son. The other factors that influenced Munshiram in his growing years were the groups of friends that took for him the place of caste or sect groups in different places. Fortunately the Swami left a detailed autobiography⁴ of his early years, and that is the second key to an understanding of the type of man he grew into: this document shows how he reacted to the ever-changing world around him.

Munshiram's family belonged to the kshatriya caste. They were for a long time in the service of the Kapurthala princes, but his grandfather Gulabray had left Kapurthala to settle in the small village of Talwan, near Jullundur. From Munshiram's descriptions, Gulabray had two salient characteristics. He was boldly outspoken, not hiding his convictions behind well-chosen, politic

words. He was also a very devout man. He was strictly faithful to his Sharvite rituals, but he had an equally deep commitment to the devotional stream of *bhakti*. He loved reading the *Bhagavad-gītā* and singing the songs of Kabir and other *bhakti* poets.

Nanakchand, Munshiram's father, was the eldest of six sons, and very much 'a chip off the old block'. He never neglected his morning prayer from the age of fourteen till his death. And 'he had a quickness of tongue just like his father', wrote Munshiram in somewhat stronger terms. He resigned from his first job as a police officer in Kapurthala after exchanging harsh words with his superiors, and the same thing happened in his second job as treasurer in Sialkot. He also soon resigned from an accountant's post in Amritsar and from a job as paymaster in Lahore. In desperation, with little prospect of employment in Lahore, he set out for Delhi.

Entirely by chance he got involved at Hissar in the British mopping-up of the mutineers at the end of the Sepoy Revolt, and as a result was made a risaldar and took part in the final military clean-up operations in the Terai. His services to the Raj were amply rewarded. He was given the choice between 1200 *bighas* of land, or the job of police inspector.⁵ For a *kshatriya* the choice was easy. He entered the second phase of his police career which he would pursue for twenty years. It was a job that required constant moves, but Nanakchand was a good family-man, and kept his family with him as long as he could. Munshiram was the youngest of his six children, born just before the professional peregrinations of his father began; by the time he was fifteen years old, the boy had lived in seven different localities.

Munshiram joined his father when he was barely three years old, and the following years, first in Bareilly and then in Badaun, were a period of utter freedom. While his elder brothers were instructed by a Maulvi, Munshiram roamed the police lines. Their father was very busy, and so was their mother, so that 'there was nobody to take proper care of our minds and bodies. In fact, I grew up like a wild forest tree.'⁶ He recalled the disgusting sight of his maternal uncle returning from a Holi festival in a state of vile drunkenness, and of his mother trying to hide the spectacle from her youngest son. 'My mother was completely illiterate... when today I remember that time, I feel ashamed that in my later life, influenced by the pride of reading a couple of words,

I disregarded the natural and luminous lessons of my mother”

When Nanakchand was transferred with a promotion to Banaras, he decided that his youngest son should receive the sacrament of initiation and start his formal education. He engaged a pandit to teach Hindi, but when he found that he had no idea at all of discipline, he sent his boys to the local Hindi school. After eighteen months Nanakchand was again transferred, this time to Banda. This township had no Hindi school, so Munshiram had to start all over again in an Urdu school. But the pattern of disruption continued. Within three years they were in Mirzapur, where Munshiram continued with Urdu and started to learn Persian, but six months later the migrant family was back in Banaras. After some months without proper schooling, a Persian tutor was engaged. However, he was addicted to *bhāng*, and let the boys do as they pleased, confining his teaching to the occasional story. When Nanakchand found out, he enrolled his boys in the private school of Babu Devakinandan. Here, the pupils attended class for only 125 days in a whole nine months! When Nanakchand was suddenly transferred again, to Ballia, the same story repeated itself, the local school was very poor, and provided no systematic education.

Thus Munshiram got very little proper schooling between the ages of seven and fifteen. However, he had succeeded learning some Hindi, Urdu, and Persian. The rapid succession of inept pandits, second-rate schools and periods of total freedom, reinforced the irresponsible, wayward, wild growth of the child. Yet during these years, even if Nanakchand proved himself a singularly incompetent parent in some ways, he did have a strong impact on his son through his deep religiosity. During the family's stay at Banda, a local Rambhakt called Buddhu exerted deep influence on Nanakchand. Tulsidas's *Rāmcharitmānas* became a regular feature of his life. He used to recite the text or preach on it to gatherings of policemen and criminals alike.⁸ That is where Munshiram acquired his taste for the *Rāmcharitmānas* which remained with him to the end of his days. He recalled that during his stay at Ballia (he was about fourteen then), he witnessed the corruption and moral degradation of the local functionaries, a circle into which he would be drawn as a young man. He wrote that 'his faith in the *Rāmcharitmānas* gave him a feeling of revulsion for that corrupt society'.⁹

During his second stay in Banaras, Munshuram became fascinated by the small groups of gymnasts and wrestlers that gathered all along the banks of the Ganga. He acquired all the articles of the devotee's outfit, and arranged his early morning systematically: first there were physical exercises and wrestling practice, and afterwards, on the way home, he performed a small act of *pūjā* at all the *lingas* and shrines. This became a daily ritual during this second stay in Banaras. It was the wrestling and the gymnastic exercises obviously that primarily attracted the boy. The devotional acts were but a small subordinate part of the larger ritual. The boy who grew up without any kind of home discipline, and very little at school, seems occasionally to have felt the need for a more structured life: the only way he could aspire to it was by imposing ritual discipline on himself.

The events that caused Nanakchand to leave so soon his senior post in Banaras are worth recalling because they had a strong impact on both father and son. When a girl died at the home of a Muslim lawyer, Nanakchand became involved in the case. Because there was a suspicion of murder, the remains of the girl were held by the police for a post-mortem examination. Another Muslim lawyer, trained at Aligarh College, managed somehow to have the investigation stopped, and had Nanakchand and two of his colleagues first summoned as hostile witnesses in the case, and then indicted. As Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's influence precluded any hope of a fair trial in Banaras, the Inspector-General eventually transferred the case to Allahabad High Court, where the three were duly acquitted. The father and son were convinced that this event, which led to the transfer to Ballia, was the result of Sir Syed's intrigues, and neither ever forgot it.¹⁰

As his son was now fifteen, Nanakchand decided that it was time he started studying seriously, and that he was old enough to be trusted on his own. He got him enrolled in the second form of the school section of the excellent Queen's College, Banaras. Munshuram was enormously pleased, and quickly transformed himself for this new important role he was about to play. He started to speak the local *Khariboli* and took to wearing the Banaras students' uniform, 'boots and all'.¹¹ He imposed upon himself a strict order of the day: rise at four, dip in the Ganga, devotions, and physical exercises. This was followed by a meal, study, class, and after

classes, study, brisk walk, temple-visit, and evening meal. After a little stroll and conversation, he retired by nine o'clock. It was indeed admirable discipline, but it lasted less than a year. In later life Munshiram deplored the fact that he started reading at night, which ruined his eyes, and that he did not succeed in banning evening study in his own Gurukul.¹²

Scholastically speaking, Banaras proved another disaster-area for the young scholar, notwithstanding his enthusiastic start. He failed in his examinations for two years running, and his name was struck off. Then he went for a year to a new school: the Rewari Talab School, run by the Reverend Hubbard, where he was surprisingly enrolled in the 'Entrance' class, the last year of the secondary school system. The weird collection of teachers, unconcerned with scholastic endeavour, made the boys' life a haven of freedom. Towards the end of that year Munshiram was shattered by a telegram announcing the death of his mother. In an utter stupor of grief he travelled to Ballia, where finally a flood of tears came to his rescue. His father told him that his mother's last wish had been to see her youngest son married and established as a lawyer. The arrow struck home. Back in Banaras, Munshiram threw himself with frantic determination into preparation for his final examinations. He not only passed, but stood first in the second division.¹³

Qualified at last for higher education, Munshiram enrolled the following year, 1876, in the first year of the College section of Queen's College, Banaras, taking as his subjects English, History, Logic and Persian. His intention was to go on to take the First Arts examination, but nothing came of it. This time his studies were interrupted by his own wedding, about which more will be said later. After the ceremony his father asked him to stay on with him in Bareilly for a while. Munshiram got caught up in a new circle of friends, could not get away from them and did not return to Banaras for his studies as was his original intention. Thus, after a disastrous primary schooling, he had finally managed to acquire entrance qualification, but the time at Queen's College was wasted in scholastic terms.

Apart from the scholastic side, a lot happened to Munshiram in these last five years from the point of view of his character and his religious development: these years between fifteen and twenty

were extremely important as they created in him firm behavioural tendencies, some of which stayed with him all his life, and others which it would take him many years to shake off.

We saw how on his arrival in Banaras the young student girded himself for his new life, adopting the Banaras students' speech and apparel, and imposing upon himself a strict daily discipline. However the rowdiness fostered by his childhood soon raised its head. He started roaming the streets in the evening with a knife in his belt, 'in imitation of the *goondas*', though he did not act like one. A couple of times he actually had to face some young *goondas*, and his physical training came in good stead. At night he sometimes slipped away to some neighbour's house, where the company sat around chewing *pan* and listening to the songs of a courtesan.¹⁴

The second year at Banaras was probably the most unsettling. Munshiram had to travel to Talwan for his betrothal, and missed a supplementary test. He failed and had to repeat the year. His friends had been promoted. He was ashamed and utterly bored. He stopped going to school, and spent his time lazily reading English novels, biographies, and travel tales. When at last his father found out, he got his son back into school, but it was too late to adequately prepare for the tests. He did not sit for the examinations and was struck off the list.

The year at the Rewari school reinforced the loafer and rowdy in him. But it is during this year, Munshiram recalled, that he went through his 'crisis of faith'. He was still performing his morning devotions and faithful to his nightly visit to the temple. One day the police prevented him and other devotees from entering the temple: a noble lady was doing her *pūjā*, and nobody was allowed inside until she had finished. Munshiram was terribly upset, started thinking seriously about temple and idol worship, and was assailed by grave doubts. For three days he discussed religion with his principal, the Reverend Leopold, but he was given up as a 'hopeless case'. Then the boy tried to learn Sanskrit to inform himself better, but he soon got tired of that. At this stage he met a Catholic priest, who was understanding and gently patient. Under his influence he started going to church, and decided to prepare himself for baptism. This plan, however, came to an abrupt end. One day he went to visit the father, but he was not in his room. Munshiram, on looking inside, saw to his horror

another father in what seemed to him a compromising situation with a nun.¹⁵

His mind, recalled Munshiram, had already been turned away from Islam because of the way his father had been treated by the Muslims in Banaras. He lost all belief in religion, and considered himself an atheist. He put the beloved *Rāmcharitmānas* aside, and started to take an interest in Urdu literature, especially Urdu poetry, and then joined the circle of Harschandra Bharatendu, where Hindi poetry was the rage. The suggestive lasciviousness of those writings strongly affected his young mind, but Munshiram declared that in a way he was safeguarded by none other than Sir Walter Scott, whose novels he now started reading voraciously, imbibing the heroic ideals of the amorous knights.¹⁶

We saw how the sudden death of his mother had stirred Munshiram deeply, and motivated him into a frenzy of study which produced the only tangible academic result of those Banaras years; his Entrance Certificate. But even before he entered College in Banaras, Munshiram took to smoking the hookah under the influence of his maternal uncle. Very soon the young College fresher became the leader of a small band of intimates, mostly sons of well-to-do fathers, officials and businessmen, who gathered in his rooms. Although in a way their association was harmless and innocent, they reinforced each other's capacity for idleness. They filled their hours with hookah smoking, playing chess, rolling dice, and endless conversations in their own 'secret' language. In his first vacation Munshiram continued to while away his time with useless reading and pointless talk. He got very bored, and when he arrived back in Banaras, the small band of friends who constituted the very essence of his life, were absent. It was in that frame of mind that Munshiram drifted into his first 'moral fall', as he described it at length in his autobiography.

It all started with a chance occurrence during a stroll along the banks of the Ganga, when Munshiram suddenly heard the cries of a girl, and saw how she was being forcibly pulled into a cave by a degenerate *sādhu*. The young man ran to the rescue, managed to wrest her free, and brought her and her aunt to his lodgings, from where he sent for the young woman's husband. All this seems to have been, if anything, a courageous and laudable action. But in the young man's mind, saturated by Scott's novels, it assumed

unhealthy overtones. He saw himself as the Knight Errant who had saved the Lady in Distress, and revelled in these juvenile fantasies. Several days later, during the Dussehra holidays, Munshiram 'saved' another young woman who was being molested near his house. He brought her inside, and went to fetch her husband. As the young couple's cook was away, they stayed with him for a meal. Afterwards, the husband went out for a walk to look at the Dussehra festivities, and during his absence Munshiram 'got ensnared by lust'. He was immediately smitten by terrible remorse, and went straight to his best friend's village to make a clean breast of his misdeed.¹⁷

But once he was back in Banaras with his cronies, the incident was soon forgotten. For some time he gambled, and during holidays he roamed around with his friends 'disguised as goondas' having an uproarious time. He started drinking, gave it up, and then took to smoking *bhāng* with his friends. His intellectual interest was aroused by English poetry, and he made a special study of Shakespeare. As we saw, the Banaras sojourn came to an abrupt end at the time of his wedding, which coincided with yet another transfer of his father, this time to Bareilly.

Munshiram was now twenty-one, and his four years at Banaras had reinforced some of the leanings of his early youth. The lazy rowdyism of earlier days had become even more dominating. Although most of this seems to have been juvenile exuberance of a bouterous yet innocent type, the young man had suffered serious lapses; lust, drinking, gambling, and *bhāng*, had all been sampled. Yet these were mere 'lapses' and had no strong hold over him. His moral defences, however, had been considerably weakened by his atheism, and his mind strongly influenced by his reading: the romanticism of Scott and the sensuality of Urdu and Hindi poetry had suffused his soul. The autobiography at this stage points repeatedly to a great weakness of character: Munshiram was easily influenced by his environment, 'When in Rome, do as the Romans do', was his motto.¹⁸ On the one hand this inclination developed in him patience with others; on the other it made him extremely vulnerable. There was also another side to this strange young man: the capacity for a sudden, deliberate, strong-willed turnabout. This strength would sometimes come to his rescue, but the sudden change would tend to make him a lot of enemies.¹⁹

Before he went home for the wedding, Munshiram joined his

father for a while in Mathura, where he held a temporary posting. In this city of Krishna, where Swami Dayananda had encountered the popular Puranic Hinduism that completely revolutionized his life, Munshiram too had a close experience of corrupt Hinduism. He saw the disgusting gluttony of the Chaube brahmins to whom his devout father donated a feast, and during a visit to the temples of the Gosains, he witnessed the attempted rape of a young female devotee by one of those sensuous pontiffs of the Krishna cult.²⁰

His wedding was celebrated in ancestral Taiwan with all the local Hindu rites. The bride was only twelve years old, and after the ceremonies she was taken away before the groom even had a chance to see her properly, let alone talk to her. Munshiram realized she was only a child, and he decided that when she eventually joined him, he would not only be a husband to her, but also a teacher.

After the wedding, Munshiram joined his father at his new post in Bareilly. It was intended that he would soon return to Banaras to complete his studies, but that did not come about. He was caught up in a new circle of friends, adult friends now, and led a life over which he would have preferred 'to draw a curtain'.²¹ These new friends were the *rautes* of Bareilly; the necessary qualifications to become a full member of that august inner circle were three — one had to have several horse-drawn carriages, at least one courtesan, and a debt of a few thousand rupees. Munshiram did not really qualify for full membership on those grounds, but he was drawn into their orbit, and wasted the rest of the year in that frivolous company.

By then he was too ashamed to go back to Banaras and repeat his first year, so instead he enrolled in Muir Central College at Allahabad. He made another new start, took himself in hand, gave up his drinking and attacked his study in the second year class. His teachers were excellent, and he took an active part in the local debating club. He became passionately interested in psychology, and spent a lot of time reading about it. In fact, as had happened before, this hobby became an obsession, and his regular study of the curriculum went by the board. Before the examinations, Munshiram furiously burst into study, leaving himself only three hours for sleep, with disastrous results. He fell ill during the last tests, and though he did quite well in English, Persian and Mathematics, his failure in Logic and Chemistry cost him the whole examination. Yet another year had been lost.

Back in Bareilly, Munshiram tried to drown his sorrows in drink and in the study of the philosophical works of Locke and Bacon; soon he was on a bottle of brandy a day. His father first thought that he was immersed in his College studies, but soon the young man was back in the pavilions of the *raues*, where dance and song dominated the scene. Seven months later he had once more to look for a College if he wanted to have another attempt at the First Arts examinations. He tried to enrol in Syed Ahmed Khan's College at Aligarh, but a sudden outbreak of cholera in that city soon put an end to that final endeavour, and he returned to his friends in Bareilly. At the wedding celebrations of some friend, which turned into the usual drunken orgiastic party, Munshiram, 'blinded' by drink, fell for the second time into the clutches of lust. Again he was struck by agonising remorse and made the firm resolution to stay away from the dissolute circle of friends, to give up drinking, and to resume his study of philosophy.²²

This was the time when Swami Dayananda Sarasvati visited Bareilly and conducted his famous disputation with the Reverend Scott. By now the Swami had acquired quite a reputation in the U.P., and Munshiram attended his public lectures and discussions. He was impressed by his strong personality and his skill in controversy. He even secretly shadowed the Swami on his regular early morning walk and watched him in meditation. Perhaps he was hoping to find a chink in his armour. He admired the fearlessness of Dayananda, who shrugged aside veiled threats that he would be prevented from lecturing if he attacked Christianity, and dared to harshly condemn a high official for keeping a courtesan. He reports that he had two private discussions with the Swami on the subject of the existence of God. He confessed to the Swami that he could not counter his logic, but that his arguments nevertheless had not given him real faith in God's reality. The Swami smiled and answered, 'Look, you asked questions, I gave answers: that was a matter of logic. When did I promise that I would make you believe in God? Your faith in God will only come when the Lord himself makes you a believer.'²³

Now the time had finally come for the long-married young man to be united with his wife. He went to Taiwan, and met her for the first time. Overwhelmed with feelings of tender protectiveness, he brought her back with him to Bareilly, where she settled into the usual domestic routine of a dutiful Hindu wife. The husband

tried his best, but he started to drink heavily again and one evening he was waylaid by one of his *raas* friends. In a little while he was vilely drunk, and for the first time found himself within the establishment of prostitutes. Somehow he got out, stumbled home and was helped by an old servant inside, where he collapsed in a drunken stupor. His young wife sat with him through that night, without food, cleaning and comforting her husband. When he finally emerged from his alcoholic daze, he realized the callousness of his behaviour in contrast with the spontaneous and natural dedication of his wife. The next day, when an enormous bill arrived from the liquor store, Shivadevi simply offered her bridal ornaments, the most precious possession of a Hindu wife, in payment. Munshiram was shamed once more into another attempt of ordering his pitiful life.²⁴

By now Munshiram's father despaired of the scholastic career of his youngest, and decided to get him a job. His eldest son was managing the family property at Taiwan, and the next two had become police sub-inspectors. Munshiram disliked the police, so his father used his influence and got him a job in the revenue department. The prospects looked good at first but soon an incident, not uncommon in the British India of those days, nipped that career in the bud. Munshiram, on one of his tours, had an encounter in a village with some British soldiers, who were taking goods from shopkeepers without due payment. He demanded that the soldiers pay on the spot, the colonel intervened, and harsh words were exchanged. Munshiram reported the incident at headquarters but found that the Collector was prepared to forget the whole incident provided Munshiram apologized to the colonel! He refused to do so and left the service.²⁵

His father now moved to a new post in Khurja, and Munshiram followed him with his wife. There an old friend of his father's, C.P. Carmichael, promised he would take the young man back into the service with good prospects of advancing in a few years to a Deputy Collector's post. This was an opening for a good career, but Munshiram asked for two months to think it over. During this time father and son came to a decision: the father would retire the following year, and instead of having his youngest son traipsing around the country following a service career, he preferred having him with him in an independent calling; it was decided that the son would take up the study of law. First he went

to Taiwan where he took over the management of the family estate from his eldest brother, who was going into a business of his own. He worked hard at this task, but, he recalled, he remained a devotee of drink and meat, and also an avid chess player. Although he still considered himself an atheist, he saw to it that the household was run according to his father's wishes, and that the Hindu feasts were duly celebrated.²⁶

So, in January 1881 Munshiram went back to his studies, going this time to Lahore to study law. He was now twenty-four years old and a married man, but the chaotic life he had led so far made settling down to a regular life of study very hard. After his arrival in Lahore he spent some time searching for proper accommodation, and then tried to earn some money by opening a shop in partnership, but lost money instead. Novel-reading took a lot of time, and when he went home for a wedding he travelled around a little afterwards. He then brought his wife back to Lahore with him. As a result of this scatter-brained behaviour Munshiram did not achieve the necessary 75 per cent attendance at lectures and failed the year. The following year he carefully saw to it that his attendance was sufficient, but his work remained far from adequate. Much time was wasted at the house of his brother-in-law at Julundur, where drink and 'good company' were amply supplied. The hours that should have been filled with study were dissipated in the useless reading of English novels and the inevitable result was that he failed his examinations for a second time.

His father, now retired, had settled in Taiwan, where Munshiram's first daughter was born. After three months of domestic bliss the family was struck with bad luck. Munshiram's brother, Atmaram, lost his job, and his father found himself with the families of both his unemployed sons on his hands. Munshiram felt terribly ashamed, but he drowned his feelings in the bottle; he became a champion drinker, 'even a full bottle of brandy could not knock me over'. For three months he lived in a drunken daze, and then decided he would study for the Mukhtari examinations, which would allow him to practice law. He spent three weeks in frantic study, day and night, but then again he changed his mind and decided to go into the revenue service, however much he hated it. His plan this time was to go to Rajputana and find a post in a princely state. He said his farewells and got on the train, but on the way he had second thoughts about the 'slavery' he would be selling

himself into. When the train stopped at Lahore, he got off, and once more applied himself feverishly to studying for the Mukhtari examinations. He achieved his second scholastic triumph, passed, and soon started work at Jullundur court-house.²⁷

In the beginning of 1884 he got a case to conduct at the Phillaur court, and settled down into practice there. As there was no drinking company, Munshiram became a sober citizen and for the first time in his life actually earned his living. He proudly handed his first earnings to his father. However, nothing seemed to last in his life, and he had to leave for Meerut to help his elder brother Mulraj who had been suspended from the police and had a court case hanging over his head. When the mess was cleared up, Munshiram returned to Jullundur to practice law, and was back once more among his old dissolute friends. His wife and daughter lived with his father while he spent all his free time drinking and reading Urdu literature in bars and the homes of his associates.

That year a new regulation was introduced concerning the law degree—those who had passed the Mukhtar examinations had thus far been allowed to go straight on to a law degree, but that regime was only to last another year; thenceforth they would first have to get their B.A. degree before being entitled to read Law. Munshiram knew he had to try immediately for his law degree, as the Mukhtar certificate severely limited his career. But his circle of friends would not let him go—they caught him in an endless cycle of drunken parties. It was the aftermath of one of those parties that Munshiram dramatically called his 'last night of darkness'.²⁸

That particular night he had to see home a drunken companion, who was too paralysed to get there by himself. Somewhere on their stagger home the friend ran drunkenly into a brothel, and Munshiram had to practically drag him home. Once they had arrived, they got on the bottle again until finally Munshiram sent his companion to bed. Shortly afterwards he heard a shriek, and found his friend was about to rape a young girl of the house. Munshiram got the girl safely away, and felt suddenly blindingly sober. He looked at himself in utter disgust, and resolutely broke the last bottle in front of him, never to touch alcohol again in his life. Next day he got on the train to Lahore, resolved once more to finish his law studies.

Munshiram looked back on that experience as the main turning point of his life²⁹ and from that day his life did take a new direction,

as we will see in the second chapter. However, was this last 'conversion experience' really such an overpowering and decisive one? It was in fact, the culmination of no less than seven 'new starts' Munshiram made in the ten years from the time he was seventeen until he was twenty-seven. These years reveal the pathetic story of repeated fresh beginnings inevitably followed by relapses. Munshiram aptly called that section of his autobiography 'the struggle of darkness and light'. Looking over all these lapses and fresh beginnings, one notices a pattern. In these seven crises, no less than four conversions were precipitated by the experience of crushing remorse after a shameful experience in which both excessive drinking and sexual license played a major part. In the three other cases the new resolve was brought about by his love for his immediate family. The shock of his mother's death spurred him on to the frenzied study that earned him his Entrance Certificate. The devotion of his wife even in his state of revolting drunkenness was another occasion for redirection. The sight of his father's distress when, after his retirement, he found himself saddled with the burden of two sons out of work gave Munshiram the sudden energy to pass his mukhtarship.

If those were the causes of his repeated redirections, what were the main causes of his equally frequent relapses? The outstanding cause doubtlessly was the influence of his immediate environment. Munshiram as a young man did not have the strength of character to withstand the pressures of his circle of companions. 'Do in Rome as the Romans do' was his motto, and he lived it out. The Banaras band, the Barcilly crowd, and the Jullundur circle were pure poison to him, and yet he could not resist their influence for long. Occasional crises made him tear himself loose, but the 'new life' never lasted very long. At twenty-seven Munshiram was neither an exceptional nor an attractive young man. He was 'one of the mob', in the last instance this being the company of hard-drinking lawyers. He was making good money with little work. Intellectually he had never achieved anything, but now he had completely gone to pot. He had repeatedly demonstrated that he was capable of tremendous bursts of energy, but that persistent application was impossible for him. Superficially he was probably very much like a number of young *raucis* and lawyers of his generation, and yet two things set him apart. One was that however much he was immersed in corrupt society, it never really corrupted him. The

second, connected with the first, was that his deep core of decency and religiosity kept making its influence felt. That was the young man who after his seventh conversion set out once more for Lahore to yet again become a student.

CHAPTER II

Conversion, and gradual ascent to leadership, 1884-93

'The excess of the Lord's grace has overpowered me'¹

1884-87—Final student years and conversion

As Munshiram expressed it in the title of the second chapter of his autobiography, his development was 'gradual'. In fact, for the next three years he was once more a student, and he continued to be dogged by failure. Only at the end of 1887 did he finally succeed in becoming a full-fledged lawyer. Yet this prolongation of his studentship was advantageous because it forced him to divide his time between Jullundur and Lahore, and in both places a new set of friends gathered around him, insulated him from his old companions, and helped him to grow in a new direction.²

In Lahore, Munshiram had even earlier made some new contacts. In 1882 he had become close to Bhai Jawahar Singh, the secretary of the Arya Samaj, and was involved with him in a debating group, the Sarvahitkarini Sabha. He started attending functions of the Brahma and Arya Samajes. After the death of Swami Dayananda in 1883 he had been present at the Arya function at Jullundur, where the eloquent speeches of Gurudatta and Hanaraj had impressed him.³ So, now when he arrived in Lahore to resume his studies, he set out deliberately to learn more about these two reform societies. He got hold of whatever literature he could find on the Brahma Samaj, studied it, and discussed it with Brahma leaders. Two Brahma doctrines could not find acceptance in his mind: the rejection of the Hindu dogma of rebirth and the belief in the continuous creation of individual souls. These ponderings brought back to his mind the discussion on these subjects between Swami Dayananda and the Reverend Scott at Bareilly, and he decided to study Dayananda's *Satyārth Prakāśh*. This work cleared up all his doubts, his atheism evaporated, and he resolved to become a member of the Arya Samaj.⁴

His friend Lal Sunderdas took him to the Sunday service of the

Arya Samaj, where Munshiram was formally accepted, and was invited to say a few words to the gathering. His speech was typical of the new convert: convictions and actions should always coincide; one should never dare to preach even one Vedic truth if one had not realized it in one's life.⁵ Basically these tenets were already the belief of the future 'radical'. At last Munshiram had become integrated into a different circle of friends, mostly young Aryas, and become part of the Lahore Arya Samaj, which by then had hundreds of members, many of whom were of the intellectual élite of the Panjab.

As soon as the news reached Jullundur that Munshiram had become an Arya, the local branch let him know that they had made him their President. That branch was a very small affair indeed, as Bhaktaram said, 'only four little trumpeters are members: it's kids' play'⁶ The important thing was that Lal Devraj, the secretary of the infant Samaj, now became closely associated with Munshiram. Devraj belonged to one of the richest families of the area, both his elder brothers went to England to study for the bar, and the eldest, Bhaktaram, became known as 'the uncrowned king of Jullundur' But Devraj was a totally different character. Religion was his life, and he dedicated himself wholly to it notwithstanding the acute displeasure of his father. His religiosity was deep and pervading, but in the local Arya Samaj he was the humble Jack of all trades.⁷ It was in the intimacy of this friendship that Munshiram's own religiosity was allowed to grow stronger in these years. In fact Devraj's success in drawing Munshiram into the Jullundur Samaj saved him from that old circle of lawyer friends. Only once did he get caught by them again, and they tried to get him back on the drink, but he resisted with revulsion, and never looked back.⁸

One of Munshiram's first religious decisions was his total abjuration of meat-eating. From childhood meat had been part of the family kshatriya diet, as was the case with many of his friends. The decision was a sudden one, brought on by the gruesome sight of a butcher boy's basket full of meat, after the reading of the chapter on diet in the *Satyārth Prakāśh*. That evening Munshiram stunned his dinner companions by throwing his plate of food, which included some meat, against the wall in a typical posture of defiance and finality. In fact, he admitted that it was for lack of real courage that he had to make this gesture so dramatically:

he felt he did not have the strength of character to say farewell to meat in a quiet and composed fashion. This step, precisely because of its strong emotional overtones, was to be a decisive one in the further development of his Arya Samaj career.⁹

On his visit to Jullundur for the Holi festival, Munshiram gave his first presidential speech at the local Samaj. Now that the 'Samaj of children' had come of age with the acquisition of a mature man of his stature, many non-Aryas of the élite came to satisfy their curiosity. The new President forcefully addressed the gathering on the evils of child marriage, and was well received by the large audience. Afterwards a few lawyers were congratulating Munshiram when the special priest of Devraj's family approached and said, 'My best wishes to you too. Heard the news? Devraj's son Gandharvaraj has been betrothed to the daughter of Lal Bahadras. Congratulations all around!' At this one of the lawyers exclaimed, 'Dear sir, your lecture has indeed had a great impact on me!', and burst into an uncontrollable peal of mad laughter. The reason was simple, the betrothed couple were less than two years old. It was for Munshiram a humiliating moment of bitter truth, but it only added fuel to the incipient fire of radicalism within him.¹⁰

Other incidents forced him to take a stand. Not surprisingly, the first real challenge came from his own father, a faithful observer of Hindu festivals and rituals. On the occasion of *ekādashī*, Nanakchand prepared all the accessories for the customary ritual, and summoned his family. Munshiram was hiding in his room with a book, hoping quietly to avoid a confrontation with his father who was just recovering from an illness. But he was sent for and had to appear before the family gathering. His father asked him to participate in the rite, and Munshiram tried gently to suggest that his heart was not in it and that he preferred to leave it all to his father. This too did not work. 'Munshiram, do you not believe in the *ekādashī* rite and the *pūjā* of brahmins? What is the matter?' Nanakchand asked. Put on the spot, the son mustered his courage to answer, 'I do fully believe in brahminhood, but I do not consider those you intend to honour with gifts as real brahmins; and I do not think that *ekādashī* is a special kind of day'. His father expressed great disappointment, but let him leave. Munshiram was deeply affected, and looked after his convalescing father with redoubled devotion.¹¹

Some time later, as Munshiram came to say goodbye to his father before leaving for Lahore, he was directed to make a small offering to Hanuman for a safe journey. But the son could not allow himself even that small gesture. He told his father he would obey him in all other matters, but he could not act against his own convictions: 'Do you want your son to be a hypocrite and an imposter?' The father was deeply hurt that his favourite son could not see more than stone in the deities he worshipped. Sadly he said, 'I do not believe that on my death there will be anybody to offer me water', thus expressing the profoundest sorrow of the orthodox Hindu father. Munshiram then decided with the hard logic of the purist that if he could not agree with his father on religious matters and serve him with these rites which his father considered essential to *moksha*, he had no right to have a share in his earthly wealth. In fact, he returned, with an explanatory note, fifty rupees his father had given him for his expenses in Lahore. Nanakchand sent the money back with his own note: 'You have promised not to ignore my worldly orders. This is such an order: take the money and keep asking money from me for your expenses!'¹²

Nanakchand's health kept deteriorating, and his days were numbered. He relied more and more on his youngest son, the favourite to whom he had always attempted to be both a father and a mother. Munshiram had the consolation in these last days, as he nursed him, of finding that his father appreciated and came to approve the honesty of his convictions, and became more tolerant of his non-orthodox religiosity. He could not have failed to see what transformation the new faith was working in the son of whom he had often had reason to despair. In the final days he expressed this touchingly by asking Munshiram to perform the Vedic *havan* of the Arya Samaj in his presence before he died. He expired before this could be arranged, but Munshiram kept his promise by holding the ceremony at the very place where he died. The total trust his father had reposed in these last days in his youngest son, who for such a long time had remained a rootless good-for-nothing, was a strong incentive to Munshiram to continue following the new road he had chosen.¹³

The most important development in Munshiram during these three years was the steady growth of his personal religious life. In this the influence of the saintly Devraj was probably the most

profound. Together they started the 'family devotions' among the Jullundur Aryas, gathering for this purpose every Wednesday at the house of a member.¹⁴ Munshiram also regularly devoted some time to religious study and in 1886 began the regular study of the Vedas, which he kept up for the next five years.¹⁵ In these readings, and in the intimate contact with Devraj, the deep religiosity that was part of his nature, as it had been of that of his father and grandfather, was allowed slowly to grow and strengthen.

His involvement in the work of the Samaj was still very much on a part-time basis, and intermittent, because his life was otherwise filled. On the one hand there was the study of the law, with which he persevered notwithstanding repeated failures, and then there was chess on which he spent five to six hours a day when he was at Talwan.¹⁶ The irresponsible laziness that dominated his youth was not easily rooted out. Nevertheless, his commitment to Samaj work slowly increased, and it is striking that already in these early years a quality of creative innovation coloured his approach. Another characteristic was that tinge of radicalism that would remain the dominant quality of his activity for many years: the urge to make conviction and practice coincide, an urge that was far from being a characteristic of most contemporary Panjabi Aryas.

One reason for this, apart from Munshiram's nature, was the atmosphere of Jullundur, where Hindu reaction against the Arya Samaj was strong from the very beginning, and which became one of the main local centres of Sanatanist agitation.¹⁷ Strong opposition was now, and would always remain for Munshiram one of the most powerful incentives to action. In 1886 there was a move to declare the Aryas of Jullundur outcaste by calling a panchayat of learned brahmins to make the declaration. However, the four prominent brahmins involved happened to be very vulnerable as upholders of *dharma*: they either had a concubine, were known gamblers, or secret consumers of liquor and meat. Devraj and Munshiram visited one of them and made it clear that if they participated in the panchayat, their conduct would be publicly exposed. On the day of the meeting the pandits judged it safer to stay away, and the threat to the Samaj collapsed.¹⁸ Not long afterwards the orthodox of Jullundur organized themselves, founding the Puranic Dharma Sabha, in direct response to Arya Samaj activities.¹⁹

That same year Munshiram took a step that would steer Jullundur towards Samaj leadership. Pandit Shyamdas from Amritsar was lecturing in Jullunder against the Samaj, and he repeatedly threw out the challenge of a *shāstrārth*, a public disputation. Munshiram heard this report on coming back from a visit to Taiwan, and immediately wrote an open letter to the pandit accepting the challenge: within two days the date was set for the event. An Arya was then sent to Lahore to ask the Samaj to provide an Arya pandit for the occasion. Although in those days the Panjab Arya Samaj did not have a governing body, Lahore was considered the centre, and its leaders the supreme mentors of the organization. The Lahoris were the people to take up public challenges in word or print, and no other branch felt it had such authority or dared to undertake any propaganda of its own. The Lahore hierarchy was very displeased with the reckless act of the Jullunder Samaj: 'Without our permission little Samajes should not arrange public disputations.'²⁰

But Munshiram and his friends had committed themselves and were not going to withdraw. They took the initiative and engaged a young Arya from Amritsar, a student of Sanskrit. At the time of the disputation, the orthodox pandit soon dropped his formal Sanskrit and started to lecture the audience in Hindi. At this Munshiram intervened and took over the Arya side. *Shāstrārth*s are notorious for having no clear victors, as Munshiram suggests also happened in this case, 'What the result was, I could not say', but he added that the public dispute had two effects. Firstly, it spurred him on in his Vedic study, and secondly, it made the Samaj much better known in the Jullundur area, and attracted a lot of new members. However, even more important is his comment that this was the beginning of a new movement in the Panjab Arya Samaj: the Lahore supremacy had been challenged and the sleeping local branches awakened from their slumber.²¹

Soon afterwards the same Pandit Shyamdas was again brought to Jullunder to agitate against the Samaj. On his arrival from Taiwan, Munshiram went straight to the pandit's lecture. He heard him misrepresent a teaching of Dayananda by only partially quoting a text of the *Satyārth Prakāśh*. Munshiram challenged him from the audience to read the whole text. When his appeal was ignored, he strode on to the platform, firmly but courteously took the book from the pandit and read the complete quotation. Then he

announced that he would lecture the following day, and invited the audience and the pandit to come and listen with the same courtesy as the Aryas had shown them. The pandit did comply, but half-way through Munshiram's speech he could not stand any more criticism of his beloved *Purānas*, and left the hall with his followers, chanting '*Rādhākṛishna ki jay*'.²²

In 1887 Jullundur was visited by Pandit Din Dayal, the secretary of the Bharat Dharm Mahamandal, a forceful and eloquent speaker who attacked the Samaj with a barrage of quotations from the scriptures and the *Shāstras*.²³ He was too overpowering for the Aryas, who quietly covered in their houses. When Munshiram, who was away, heard of this, he sent a challenge to the pandit and came right away to Jullundur. He boldly counter-attacked, distributed hundreds of leaflets announcing his counter-lectures, and marched to the pandit's lecture with his Aryas, who regained their courage. At the end of the lecture Munshiram, to the consternation of the organizers but the approval of the crowd, announced that he was ready to have a discussion next day, but that if the pandit did not appear, he would give another lecture entitled 'A sticky jam of camel hair', a derisive metaphor for the pandit's puranic pot-pourri. The pandit prudently stayed away, but the people liked the lecture, and one sardar was so impressed by the impact of Munshiram's passionate eloquence that he hired him for a huge fee to represent him in a court case.²⁴

Munshiram was also involved in the beginnings of street-preaching by the Aryas. As early as 1885 he and his student companions in Lahore organized regular weekly preaching excursions into different parts of the city. A year later, at the time of the Dussehra festival, the Jullundur Aryas organized the same thing in direct competition with the Christian missionaries who had been using that method for years. Munshiram noted that the preaching of Devraj was most impressive, and that the sight of the son of the leading family on the religious hustings had a great impact on the people. He also remarked with pride that it was a characteristic of the Jullundur Aryas that their behaviour and their speech was always 'polite', even under grave provocation. Jullundur certainly had changed in a couple of years, and could no longer ignore the presence of the Samaj.²⁵

Jullundur was indeed making its mark also among the Punjabi Aryas. In fact Munshiram was invited to give a lecture at the

1886 Lahore Samaj anniversary, a lecture described by the *Arya Patrika* as 'eloquent and forceful'.²⁶ Yet its place was still far from being one of prominence, the Jullundur branch does not feature in the list of the fifteen who took part in the foundation of the Panjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha on 5 October 1886.²⁷ Munshiram's visit to Bombay in August 1887 increased his involvement in Samaj affairs and also his status in it. He went there to see his brother-in-law Bhaktaram off on his journey to the U.K., but took the opportunity of meeting those earliest members of the Samaj who had founded the society with Swami Dayananda: Chhabildas Lalubhai, Sevaklal Karsondas, and others, by now legendary figures in the short history of the Samaj. He lectured at the Bombay branch on the subject of divine worship, but the fact that his own account of his Bombay stay is dominated by the description of his contact with business people, mostly Parsis, and mentions only incidentally his contact with Aryas, is another indication that he was at this stage far from being a full-time Arya.²⁸

Indeed, during these years, the goal of being a fully qualified lawyer kept him resolutely to his study, and he confessed that it had become his overriding ambition to be one day a judge of the chief court in Lahore.²⁹ Apart from his studies, he was also engaged in his mukhtar practice, which was doing reasonably well. Although the study and the practice of law took up a lot of his time and interest, we find already in these early years a certain hesitancy about the profession of law creeping into his mind. He was quite prepared to comply with the conventions that governed the successful practice of the law: one needed the paraphernalia of an office well-stocked with impressive volumes, be they unread, a nice carriage, the proper attire of suit and boots, and the service of a couple of munshis who did most of the work. But when in a particular case Munshiram discovered some dishonesty in his munshi's proceedings, he immediately withdrew from it to the great distress of the munshi.³⁰ This act harmed his practice, but it recovered readily, and he made a good living. Nevertheless the munshi was right in a way: such silly scruples about minor moral points should have no place in the practice of an ambitious lawyer! Their very presence in a legal man made one wonder if he was really deeply dedicated to success at the bar.

During these years a figure begins to appear at the edges of Munshiram's life who was to influence him greatly in later years:

Pandit Gurudatta Vidyarthi. The first time Munshiram had heard him speak was in 1883 in Jullundur after the death of Swami Dayananda. He heard him again at the Lahore Samaj anniversary celebrations in 1885, 1886, and 1887. From the time of their first meeting in 1885, Munshiram felt that he had met 'a soul with whom my own soul can find union'.³¹ This was not surprising, because there were some important things that must have drawn them together, even if they were very different in other ways. Munshiram was the elder by seven years, and still muddling along to get his degree. Gurudatta had been a brilliant student, and was immediately after his M.A. in 1886, at the age of twenty-two, appointed Assistant Professor of Science at Government College, Lahore. But both were converts from a period of atheism, and in both cases the reading of Dayananda's works had been a major factor in their conversion. Both were burning with the fire of convert-enthusiasm. Gurudatta was the first Arya to bury his own father according to the Vedic rites of the *Sanskārvīdhī* of Swami Dayananda.³²

We have noted how Munshiram's laziness was punctuated by bursts of tremendous energy. Although Gurudatta never was one for the lazy life, yet his application to work tended to have a strange and often disconcerting rhythm. When he wrote or became engrossed in a book, he sometimes went on for days without stopping, and then would sleep for a full twenty-four hours.³³ Munshiram acknowledged that Gurudatta impressed him and influenced him to undertake a closer study of Dayananda's works, and that talking with him enhanced his own religious fervour.³⁴ But he also admitted that as he got more involved in his law work and met with success, the figure and influence of Gurudatta easily receded into the background.³⁵

These three years, divided between Lahore and Jullundur, were years of slow growth, of Munshiram's inner religious life and of his involvement in the Samaj. He was still being torn in different directions. He had strong professional ambitions and commitments, and had still not lost all taste for the easy, idle life. His involvement in the Samaj was sporadic, part-time, but every one of his Arya activities tended to have two pronounced characteristics: they were innovative, and they also had a flavour of radicalism.

1888—A year of decision.

In Munshiram's life the year 1888 stands out in bold relief as a major turning-point. It is interesting that Gurudatta's biographer also refers to that same year as 'the most eventful year' in the Pandit's life.³⁶ The year started with a bang: Munshiram's first son was born at the end of 1887 and named Harischandra. Now he was at last a householder in the full sense. At the beginning of 1888 he finally passed his law examinations at Lahore: he was now thirty-one years old, and his student days were over. At last he took his place in Jullundur as a fully-fledged lawyer, according to the dying wish of his mother. He commenced building his own house in Jullundur: a large mansion with many rooms and courtyards and ample stables, worthy of one who had the intention of becoming a leading citizen of the town.³⁷

Munshiram stepped resolutely into public life. He founded a debating society among the lawyers of the town which lasted only a very short time, not surprisingly, considering the quality of that local professional group.³⁸ Then he participated in establishing a local committee of the Indian National Congress, in preparation for the coming Allahabad session. He was appointed secretary, and quickly demonstrated his zeal by proposing to the Congress members a programme of intensive propaganda work in towns and villages. His colleagues on the committee laughed him out of court saying, 'this is not the Arya Samaj!' In an impressive speech he supported a motion 'that the National Congress is an essentially loyal movement and calculated to at once benefit the rulers and the ruled'. The local Congress faced great hostility from the Agharh party, who managed to keep practically all local Muslims away from Congress. But hardly anything happened after the founding of the local Congress branch. Munshiram's initial enthusiasm soon cooled of, and he resigned from his post as secretary. Neither of his ventures into public life had given him any satisfaction.³⁹

With his new-found professional and public stature, Munshiram now strode with greater determination on to the Arya Samaj platform, but in the first half of the year things tended to go sour. Lahore had disappointed Jullundur again at the end of 1887: the latter's request for speakers had met with no response.⁴⁰ Although the Lahore Aryas clung to their authority, they were seldom prepared to carry the responsibility it entailed. Jullundur felt it

had to stand on its own feet if it wanted to get anywhere. Munshiram visited the Gurudaspur Samaj in early 1888, and wrote in his diary that, 'its condition is deplorable. The office-holders are wealthy, but are all fond of drink, meat, and hunting. Instead of serving the Samaj, they do it untold harm.'⁴¹ Next he went to Amritsar for its Samaj anniversary, but he admitted that it was not really out of zeal, but rather to get away from work and have a little diversion.⁴² He gave two lectures at the Lahore Samaj early in the year, but the attendance was very disappointing. Wistfully he wrote, 'I was an unknown quantity, and Agnihotri's lectures drew all the crowds'.⁴³

Dissatisfaction drove him into new fields. In May he started to write his first pamphlet, *Varnavyavasthā*, about the Hindu institution of *varna*, or class.⁴⁴ This first effort at authorship made him realize how much time he wasted on chess. He had half-heartedly tried to give it up a couple of times, but now he stopped for good.⁴⁵ In June he went to Kapurthala where he lectured and conducted a public dispute, but by mid-year he felt frustrated and restless. In August he visited Lahore, and had his first intimate contact with Gurudatta. He wrote in his diary, 'The meeting with dear Gurudatta has given me new religious strength'.⁴⁶ In fact it galvanized his spirit, and a new fervour is evident in his initiatives during the remainder of that year.

In September he started a girls' school at Talwan, but he had to close it soon on account of the 'unworthiness' of the lady teacher. He did not give up, however, for in October when he heard from his daughter how her teachers at the missionary school tended to indulge in Christian propaganda among the pupils, he withdrew her and decided to open a girls' school in Jullundur. Plans were drawn up immediately and on 3 November an appeal for funds was launched.⁴⁷ As a result of his conversations with Gurudatta he felt it was necessary to reach the people with the Arya message: he decided to launch a weekly, the *Saddharmprachārak*, and within days the necessary foundations were laid.⁴⁸ Thus in a short time he initiated two projects that would have a long and successful history and contribute considerably to the development of the Arya Samaj.

His whole outlook and attitude were renovated. Now that another of his time-wasting pleasures, chess, had gone, his life was much more ordered, and Samaj work became part of his daily

routine. He taught Swami Dayananda's books at his home, and in the evenings the Aryas gathered there for *bhajan*. This new spirit was amply demonstrated when a dozen Jullundur Aryas went to Lahore for the anniversary celebrations. At the Jullundur station Munshiram gave an address before they left, and they sang hymns the whole way to Lahore. They continued their *bhajans* on the Lahore horse-train and while walking to the Samaj *mandir*. Gurudatta's speech impressed Munshiram so much that he felt he could only compare it to Dayananda's own addresses. After that lecture he decided to cut another tie: he gave up tobacco, not an easy move, as he had grown very fond of his hookah. On their return the Jullundur Aryas started regular *nagarkirtan* in the town in preparation for their own anniversary.⁴⁹

The Jullundur anniversary celebrations at the end of that memorable year put the seal on the new spirit of Munshiram and the local Aryas, and was an apposite public inauguration of a completely new life-style. This time a large delegation arrived from Lahore: Lala Sandas, Gurudatta, Lala Hansraj, and two Swamis recently converted to the Samaj by the Pandit, were the leaders of a group of forty. They marched through the town to the sound of music. A local *rais* led the march, carrying the OM flag, followed by Gurudatta and the *sannyāsīs* who chanted Vedic *mantras*. Householders followed singing hymns. 'The impact on the town people was such that it seemed that the kingdom of peace had come down on the market place.'⁵⁰

The celebrations went on for four days. A great public *havan* was held, presided over by the *sannyāsīs*, and public lectures and discussions were organized. As there was at that time also a meeting of the local Dharmasabha, the interaction of Aryas and the orthodox was frequent. The young, learned, fiery Gurudatta was no doubt the star attraction, and this anniversary proved clearly that there was scholarship, talent, and leadership in the Samaj. It put the Jullundur branch on the map; and its prestige and influence in the area increased considerably. Many new members were recruited, some of whom were very prominent citizens, and a Jam *sādhu* was received into the Samaj. This success also changed the standing of Jullundur in the estimation of the Panjabi Aryas: it was obvious that a new vital centre outside Lahore was coming into being.

The most important effect on Munshiram was that a deep friendship developed between him and Gurudatta. He was com-

pletely overwhelmed by the scholarship, the sincerity, and the fire of the Pandit whom hitherto he had admired only from a distance. Gurudatta had to revise his former superficial opinion of Munshiram: he had previously thought that the Jullundur Samaj, under Munshiram's influence, had a 'Brahmo spirit', a conciliatory and compromising attitude.⁵¹

The trend of their endless conversations gives an idea of the strong impact Gurudatta had on Munshiram. One day the Pandit asked him a blunt question, 'can a man be a lawyer, and yet remain a man of conscience?' The honest answer was, 'In my experience he cannot'.⁵² Gurudatta, who once berated Lajpat Rai for pursuing a legal career,⁵³ used this candid answer to convince his young follower Ram Bhaj Datta that he should not become a lawyer. But the point of the lesson was not lost on Munshiram himself—Gurudatta was a lion for work, and very soon an excess of it was to lead to a premature demise. Munshiram was shamed into giving up that last remaining time-wasting hobby of novel-reading.⁵⁴ The friends also discussed at length the question of preaching, and the following year was to see the results of this.

Another topic came up: the question of meat-eating. An orthodox *rais* resented Devraj's insistence that the killing of animals in honour of the goddess could not possibly be part of the real *santana dharma*. He asked if Hansraj was revered among the Aryas, and Devraj replied that he was no less than a Mahatma, the like of whom was not to be found among the sanatanists. Thereupon the *rais* ironically exclaimed: 'But he eats meat! How can so great a man and so great a Mahatma go together?' The Aryas present were speechless and looked to the brilliant Gurudatta for a reply. The Pandit simply said, 'He was still eating meat five days ago. If he has given it up now, I do not know about it.' Munshiram commented upon this cutting remark as being an act of courage that would soon harm the Pandit's career. He added that though his admiration for Hansraj remained unchanged, his faith in the Lahore leaders waned on account of their meat-eating.⁵⁵ Up to now the abjuration of meat had been for Munshiram a purely personal choice, but now under Gurudatta's influence it became a Samaj affair. Through these various conversations between the two new friends ran the unifying thread of radicalism, of total commitment, and Munshiram, who was previously sus-

pected of having a 'Brahmo spirit', would the following year be labelled an 'extreme radical'.

Thus that year of decision came to a grand finale. Munshiram, free now from the demands of studentship, had at last completed the many steps of his progressive 'conversion' by freeing himself from the bonds of the pleasures of smoking, chess, and novel-reading. He had committed himself to some important initiatives in the sphere of Arya reform: pamphlet-writing, a girls' school, a weekly. He had put the Jullundur Samaj in the limelight as an important new centre of Arya Samaj life. Although his law practice prospered, doubts about its value and ethics had begun to disturb him. And finally, for the first time, he had acquired a close friend, who was almost a *guru* to him, Pandit Gurudatta. In this year of decision, the figure of Gurudatta was all-important. The contacts between the two in August and December sealed a friendship that was decisive for the coming years, when the Panjab Arya Samaj was to face a split in its ranks.

1889-93 Leadership

Munshiram's quick ascent to leadership in the Panjab Arya Samaj during these years coincided with the growing dissent among the Aryas that would lead to the split of 1893. Four important interconnected issues formed the basis of this controversy. The main and initial disagreement was about the policy of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V.) College, founded in 1886 by the Panjab Aryas as a memorial to the death of Swami Dayananda in 1883. A growing number of Aryas felt that the school had deviated from its original primary purpose of being a centre of Sanskrit learning and Arya ideology. The second issue was that of *prachār*, preaching and propaganda, and the commitment of the Samaj and its funds to that purpose. The third bone of contention was the question of meat-eating, which in vehemence came to dominate the scene. The last question was that of female education.⁵⁴

The central problem was that of the role of the D.A.V. College. As a new group of Aryas, under the inspiration and leadership of Gurudatta, concentrated on and evolved the religious aspect of Samaj life, they increasingly felt that the College had forgotten Swami Dayananda's revolutionary message, and was content to

supply clerks and officials 'for the lower strata of the machinery of Government'.⁵⁷ However, their own aspirations towards change were thwarted because the reigning D.A.V. Managing Committee was at that time the body of power and prestige in the Panjab Arya Samaj. Moreover, the same people who dominated that organization were also the office-holders of the Lahore Samaj, the leading one in the province. Thus the ideological controversy of necessity evolved into a struggle for power, specifically for the control of the Managing Committee and of the Lahore Samaj. In 1886 a third centre of power had come into being with the foundation of the Panjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, which was to be the provincial management organ on which the branches of the Panjab were represented. However, this body was initially rather ineffective, as it lived 'in the shadow of the College and the Managing Committee'.⁵⁸

The religiously committed anti-College group felt that one of the main duties of the Samaj had to be religious propaganda, *prachār*. They also wanted this to be part of the function of the College, which should undertake the training of Arya preachers. Moreover, in their opinion the Samaj should allocate special funds for the training of preachers outside the College. On both these points they clashed with the College faction. The financial aspect was an important one in this confrontation. The growing College needed increasing funds, and for years had been the only fundraiser among the Aryas. These vital funds, which were very slow-moving anyway, could not be diminished in the crucial years of growth.

The meat-eating issue became a central and decisive one as the controversy became increasingly bitter. It was in this aspect of the dissension that passions and personal antagonisms often silenced reason and bent principles. Lajpat Rai illustrated this when he wrote:

When the split actually took place, it presented the strange spectacle of a large number of vegetarians, who were so both by conviction and by caste-rules, joining the ranks of those who stood for liberty of thought and conscience for the individual, and of some who actually indulged in meat diet remaining with the other party.⁵⁹

The controversy over the education of girls was not a major one, and entered the total picture only in its later stages. But here too the question of finance played a major part. The detailed history

of the split need not be recounted here, as the present purpose is to show how Munshiram became involved in the process, and ended up by being acknowledged as the leader of the party that became variously called the 'Mahauma party', the 'Gurukul party' or simply 'the radicals'.

The exhilaration and resounding success of the third anniversary of the Jullundur Samaj had left Munshiram for nearly three weeks in a kind of daze, as he wrote in his diary:

It seems that the success achieved by our Samaj in these celebrations has rendered all my powers languid. This year the Lord has given our Samaj abundant favours. The excess of his grace has overpowered me. It is a wonder that this Samaj, founded by us sinners, is progressing. But when I reflect that it is the Lord's grace, then my astonishment fades. O Lord! Save me from all kinds of sinful desires, lead me to the truth, and give me that understanding for which the ancient *rishis* gave up their very life. Indeed, the success of the anniversary had left me weak, but this morning I have been freed from my inertia.⁶⁰

Clearly, the burst of activity into which Munshiram was about to launch had deep roots of religious commitment.

In the next six months he threw himself into the work. The month of February saw the first issue of the *Saddharmpracharak*, of which he was both manager and editor. He plunged into an orgy of wide reading, devouring over twenty solid volumes, including Herbert Spencer's works, Draper's *Conflict between Religion and Science*, Alexander Bain's *Education as a Science*, Guizot's *History of Civilization*, and Lyall's *Asiatic Studies*.⁶¹ He started a systematic study of Dayananda's *Vedabhdshya*,⁶² and he conducted *Satyarth Prakāsh* recitations for anyone interested.⁶³ He undertook the composition of a hymn manual, and initiated a training class for Arya preachers, which did not last very long. He took upon himself a major share of the street-preaching at this time: Devraj who used to specialize in that kind of propaganda, was absent and Munshiram did not want his absence to be felt in a slackening of pace. Devraj had gone to Calcutta with the intention of travelling to Burma to preach the Arya religion. He had taken that decision when his father, embarrassed by his religious zeal pressurized him to cut down on his Samaj activities. When Devraj did actually carry out his threat and left to become a missionary overseas, his father relented, and had him followed and brought back before he embarked. The total dedication of his friend must have fanned the fires of Munshiram's zeal.⁶⁴

In the middle of the year an event occurred that had tremendous impact on Gurudatta's friends, and particularly on Munshiram. The D.A.V. school opened a tertiary section, and the Management Committee chose Hansraj as principal rather than Gurudatta. Although the Pandit was academically better qualified, there were two important reasons for a decision against him: he had become in the last years increasingly erratic in his behaviour, and his health had become precarious. His followers, however, saw the appointment in purely negative terms: the man they admired as the best suited by far through his profound knowledge of both Sanskrit and Western science, and who had worked for the D.A.V. fund more than anybody else, had been rejected in favour of a candidate who was in agreement with the established powers in the College. This slap in the face of their idol had been preceded by two other such instances, when the Management Committee had rejected proposals made by Gurudatta. His motion to find five hundred rupees to start a Sanskrit library had been voted down, and his proposal to introduce the study of Panini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* in the school and college curriculum was watered down to a bare minimum. In both these cases Lala Hansraj had been Gurudatta's main opponent.⁶⁵

Munshiram was deeply indignant. He wrote in his autobiography that since Gurudatta was not prepared to take any notice of the attacks against him, he himself would become his defender through the pages of his *Saddharmapracāra*.⁶⁶ Right from the start the weekly agitated against the Managing Committee, and when Gurudatta's plea for a preachers' school in Lahore was ignored, Munshiram started such a school in Jullundur, which did not last long.⁶⁷ The Gurudatta circle felt it had to take the initiative outside the existing power structure. In September they formed a *Committee for praçhār*, as announced in their *Arya Patrika*. 'Because it is most necessary to open a class for the study of the books of the *rishis*, until the D.A.V. Managing Committee or another lawfully instituted committee takes up this work... a provisional committee has been formed'.⁶⁸ Munshiram was elected President. Many Panjab Aryas were at first shocked by this bold move made outside the accepted channels of authority. But the pressure this move was intended to exert took effect: within two months the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha passed the following resolution: 'It is our duty to institute a school for preachers. For that purpose,

the task of making its rules etc. should be committed to Munshiram.⁶⁹ But Munshiram went even further. At the end of the year he founded a regional organization outside the Pratinidhi Sabha, the Doab Upadeshak Mandal, to organize preaching in Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Kapurthala, Phillaur, and the surrounding countryside. Thus he made it clear from the start where his sympathies lay, and showed the Lahore power élite that things could be achieved outside its ambit.⁷⁰

After the death of Gurudatta from galloping consumption on 19 March 1890, Munshiram emerged as the leader of the critics of the Managing Committee. As this Committee was solidly stacked with people of the College party, the only time outsiders could try to influence policy was during the annual meeting of the much wider D.A.V. College Trust and Management Society. In 1891 Munshiram and his supporters proposed the creation of a Vedic department and the demotion of Science and English to optional subjects. Though they were defeated, their strength had grown to one third of the total number. The membership of the central core of their faction is significant: six members were from Lahore, four from Jullundur, and one each from Jhelum, Amritsar, and Multan.⁷¹

In the meantime the issue of meat-eating had gained prominence. Lala Sandas, the central power figure in Lahore was one target, Hansraj was another. The latter was particularly vulnerable in that his brother Mulraj was a public propagandist for meat-eating.⁷² Already in July 1898 the Lahore Samaj had faced and rejected a motion to ban any Arya who ate meat from having the full rights of membership as *Ārya Sabhāsad*.⁷³ The 15 March 1890 issue of the *Saddharmprachārak* praised the Quetta Samaj for having passed precisely such a resolution.⁷⁴ This indicates Munshiram's position, adopted under Gurudatta's influence, early in the controversy. In 1893, the year of the split, Munshiram actually took initiative in this matter.

The death of Gurudatta had removed the one person who had great influence on Munshiram's development in these decisive years, but he was soon replaced by another who would reinforce the direction of that development, Pandit Lekhram. A couple of months after Gurudatta's death, Lekhram came to Jullundur, fell ill, and stayed for over two weeks. He returned in 1891 and 1892, and finally he settled there in 1893. It is no wonder that a

close friendship sprang up between these two. Lekhram too was a religious enthusiast, whose faith in the Vedic religion had its origin in his meeting with Swami Dayananda in Ajmer in 1880. He gave up his post in the police force, and became an indefatigable full-time propagandist through his writings and lectures. In 1887 he became editor of the *Arya Gazette*, and published many pamphlets. In 1880 he had been appointed by the Multan Samaj to collect materials for a biography of Dayananda: he became the restless *Ārya Musāfir*, constantly travelling in search of those materials, dedicated to propaganda by speech and pen.⁷⁵

Under Lekhram's influence Munshiram's travel and preaching increased. He grasped every opportunity to visit branches of the Samaj all over the Panjab, and he started those preaching tours, which he later called his *dharma-yātrās*. In August 1890, after Lekhram's visit, he went on such a tour, lasting about three weeks starting from Ludhiana, in the beginning of 1891 he preached around Hoshiarpur, in March he went to Hardwar for the Kumbh Mela, where he was joined by Lekhram, and in September he toured the Dharmasala district. In later years these tours would become even more extensive and intensive.⁷⁶

Yet, all this activity was not making any inroads into the power structure of the Arya Samaj. In fact, at the end of 1891 Lala Hansraj had concentrated in his person the three most important functions of the Panjab Arya Samaj. He was Principal of D.A.V. College, President of the Lahore Arya Samaj, and President too of the Pratinidhi Sabha. Lala Lajpat Rai was also moving up, becoming a vocal and influential figure, 'replacing Gurudatta on the platforms of the Arya Samaj', as Munshiram wrote; he also came to occupy the powerful position of Secretary of the D A V Managing Committee.⁷⁷

In mid-1891 Munshiram was shattered by the death of his young and devoted wife Shivadevi, who left him with four young children: Vedkumar, 10, Amritkala, 6, Harschandra, 4, and Indra, only two years old. Luckily for the children a childless aunt lovingly took the place of their mother. But the shock was too great for Munshiram: he tried to keep all his work going, but fell ill at the beginning of 1892. He could not shake off a persistent fever, and finally was persuaded to spend four months, from June to September, in the hills near Dharmasala. There he slowly recovered.⁷⁸

In October Lekhram visited him in Jullundur,⁷⁹ and that same

month their party had its first public success. Munshiram was elected President of the Pratinidhi Sabha, and his friend, Durgaprasad, secretary. The meeting had been a long one, and both sides had fought a strenuous battle of tactics and of nerves. The radicals had won the day thanks to their increased support among the branches outside Lahore. The contest became a different one now that the radicals had at last captured one of the power centres of the Samaj. For Munshiram it meant yet another shift in his life, as he wrote in his autobiography, 'From that time my life was no more my own. It now belonged to all people'.⁸⁰ The reason for this was that Munshiram was not satisfied with the function of Sabha president as he found it: from playing a minor role he transformed the Sabha into the main centre of power and action in the Panjab Arya Samaj. In the process his job of president grew into a nearly full-time occupation.

That year, on the occasion of the Lahore Samaj anniversary, Lala Mulraj made a bold and imprudent move: he propounded the thesis that meat consumption was sanctioned by the *Vedas*.⁸¹ He followed this up with a tract along the same lines.⁸² Although many Aryas were meat-eaters, this open advocacy of it with the support of Vedic texts by a prominent Arya from the pulpit of the principal Samaj was unprecedented, and too much to bear. Within a short time several tracts on the subject rolled from the presses, and the controversy grew personal and acrimonious.⁸³ Munshiram recalled later that to him Mulraj's fateful speech was the cause of the split that followed.⁸⁴ In the following year the issue became the central one in the struggle.

Munshiram, as President of the Pratinidhi Sabha, was now in the forefront and took the initiative. In March 1893 he tried to exclude non-vegetarians from membership of the Sabha, but was unsuccessful.⁸⁵ In April he recalled Lekhram, who was touring Rajputana preaching and searching for materials for Dayananda's biography, so that he could assist in the intensifying struggle.⁸⁶ The May meeting of the D.A.V. Society was a crucial one. Attack after attack by the radicals was successfully repulsed by the College party, leading to unseemly uproar. At that stage Munshiram stalked out of the meeting with his Jullundur Aryas, followed by other sympathizers. This impulsive act was decisive. Now that the hall was cleared of the most vocal opponents, the College party had no difficulty in having the Society pass a number of

administrative measures that ensured the control of the College by the Managing Committee.⁸⁷

In August Munshiram sent Lekhram to Jodhpur, where meat eating had become a burning issue. Pandit Bhimasena, the revered pupil of Dayananda, had assured Maharaja Pratap Singh that the killing of harmful animals and even the consumption of their meat had not been considered a sin by the Swami. Lekhram was sent to counteract that argument.⁸⁸ That same month the executive of the Lahore Samaj rejected a motion to expel Muiraj for his anti-vegetarian agitation. But the College party saw the writing on the wall; its majority in the executive was steadily running out like sand in an hourglass. In September their fears became reality: Durgaprasad was elected over Lajpat Rai as President of the Lahore Arya Samaj. Their supremacy in that body had come to an end. They withdrew and formed their own separate branch in Anarkali, electing Lajpat Rai as its President. That year two separate anniversary celebrations were held in Lahore.⁸⁹

Thus the last act of the split was played out in Lahore, and Munshiram had no direct part in it. In fact he went to Lahore in November in order to bring about a reconciliation, and in his contemporary analysis of the split he referred to the two parties as the 'Durgaprasad Party' and the 'Hansraj Party'. He somehow saw himself outside the controversy, and, as President of the Pratinidhi Sabha, in a commanding position that could make him a conciliator. In a special supplement of his *Saddharmprachāra* he gave detailed advice on how the split could be healed by a policy of mutual accommodation.⁹⁰ No doubt Munshiram was sincere in these efforts. But his suggestions came much too late now that the power struggle was at its height. Moreover, how could the College party have accepted him as a sincere and impartial peacemaker, since all his actions and declarations in that crucial year had been clearly in support of, even in leadership of, the other party? In fact, to them he was even more than the local Durgaprasad, the leader of the opposition.

In all the causes at issue between the two parties, Munshiram was heavily committed to one side, that of the 'radicals'. He had earned himself that epithet as early as 1889 when he proposed that Arya marriage contracts should be guided by 'quality', and not by caste-considerations.⁹¹ In December 1891 the *Tribune* reported that he gave an impressive speech 'on the peril of leaving a gulf

between convictions and actions'.⁹² His religious fervour, part of his mental make-up, was strengthened in these years by his two closest associates, Gurudatta and Lekhram, both dedicated, enthusiastic converts. Lajpat Rai early realized that profound influence.⁹³ As time went on, Jullundur became a new centre of Arya influence outside Lahore, and Munshiram, its creator, grew likewise in stature. When in 1892 he was elected President of the Pratinidhi Sabha, he extended the influence of that body, thus intensifying a struggle for power that drove the College party into schism for the sake of self-preservation.

Extracts from Munshiram's diary clearly indicate that to him this was not just a political move for power and prestige, but that it was closely integrated with deep religious motivations

Has there been real progress in my spiritual condition? You who know our hearts, you know the kind of unholy drives that are hidden under the outer show. O Lord, give me the strength to be able to walk in the path of *dharma* and hold firmly to the truth.⁹⁴

His doubts about the time he spent in his law practice grew:

I ask myself again and again whether I can remain a lawyer now that I have taken the vow to serve the Vedic religion. Where is the way, who will tell me? I should ask the Lord. This state of indecision is no good. I have to make a complete surrender of myself in the service of my country and my faith. But my family too is a great obstacle. I am in a state of confusion. There should be a decision soon. Lord, show me the way.⁹⁵

The agony was real, but the final decision would take time. Meanwhile, his professional work tended to recede more and more into the background.

Writings

In these years Munshiram began his writing career, which would last a full thirty-seven years, until his death. Immediately a pattern was set that would not change: he engaged in two types of writing, journalism and pamphlet literature. The Urdu *Saddharmprachārak* was the first of many journals he launched. It started as a joint venture, some sixteen Aryas took out shares, and appointed Munshiram and Devraj as completely independent co-editors, and Munshiram as manager. After two years, during which the paper ran at a loss, Munshiram bought back all the shares and became sole owner. Within a year the paper grew from a small format

8-page to a large format 16-page production. It concentrated on religious and social matters, and on the activities of the Arya Samaj. Although it was outspoken and strong in its convictions and judgements, it never stooped to the gutter language and tactics adopted by many little sectarian rags of the period.⁹⁶

The first pamphlet Munshiram published was the Urdu *Varnavyavasthā*, 'The system of classes'. It was announced as the first in a series 'Vedic Dharm Prakash', which was to be an answer to the urgent need among the Panjabi Aryas, and in particular the women, many of whom did not know Hindi or Sanskrit. Its contents are basically an uninspired exposition of Dayananda's theories about caste and class, padded with references to other civilizations such as the Roman and the Egyptian culled from his readings. Interestingly, the author diverged from the Swami in one instance: whereas Dayananda held that the great *Mahābhārata* war was the starting-point of the social disintegration of the ideal Vedic commonwealth, Munshiram pointed to the Muslim incursions as being that time of transition. 'There was no trace of the present caste system during the puranic age. It is a direct outcome of the advent of Muslim rule in India.'⁹⁷

Towards the end of the booklet the real, original Munshiram emerged. He strongly criticized the Arya Samaj, 'despite a great deal of lip-service, nothing concrete has been done to show that it really believes in its principles'.⁹⁸ And then he came with penetrating insight to the crux of the matter: that the only way to break new ground and really achieve something was by taking action in the two most sensitive spheres of caste-life, dietary customs and marriage-alliances. The true radical then spoke out:

We do not agree with those who hold the opinion that everything will right itself with the passage of time. Time itself does not heal anything unless society itself moves. And society, which is but a collection of individuals, does not move unless its members are prepared to do so.⁹⁹

His next pamphlet, in English, entitled 'The Future of the Arya Samaj, a Forecast', was published in 1893, it was in fact the text of a public lecture he gave to the Lahore Arya Samaj on 27 January 1893. It was a very important statement, as it was the first he made as recently elected President of the Pratimdhū Sabha: in it he put before the Aryas what he saw as the proper vocation of the Samaj. He sketched a broad historical picture of the degeneracy of

Hinduism before the advent of the British, and of the mortal danger the British Raj imported in the form of western philosophical scepticism and missionary Christianity. The first efforts in defence of Hinduism by Rammohan Roy and Keshub Chandra Sen had been futile, because 'their weapons were neither indigenous nor natural'¹⁰⁰ Swami Dayananda was the true prophet, the great *rishi* sent by God to save India.

The Arya Samaj had taken over that task from the Swami, had made puranic Hinduism 'totter', and had 'given battle to Christianity and Islam'. But it was no time to rest on past laurels, because 'the grandest struggle of them all is still to come', the fight against 'the powerful giant of western agnosticism'. The task of the Arya Samaj was no less than 'bringing the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth'. He concluded, 'Brethren! The future of the Arya Samaj and with it of your country is in your hands.' The mission was 'a noble one' to be accomplished 'in the throes of a momentous crisis'¹⁰¹ All this could easily be dismissed as high-flown, bombastic oratory, the ravings of an enthusiast as he was momentarily swept away by the flood of his own grandiloquence. Though the style was no doubt oratorical, the ideas and convictions were real. This was a carefully written speech, published as a pamphlet, and gave expression to a new facet of Munshiram. His enthusiasm in taking up a new cause, in this case the leadership of the Panjab Arya Samaj in the widest sense, made him genuinely see the situation in dramatic terms as one of grave crisis, in which his task and that of the Samaj was one of critical import.

Politics

After his disappointing experience of the Congress in 1888, when he resigned as local secretary, Munshiram seems to have lost interest in politics, although he kept in touch, in 1890 he spoke at the Jullundur Congress meeting¹⁰² In mid-1893 the Panjab Congress stirred itself into action in preparation for the Congress session to be held in Lahore at the end of the year. Munshiram was asked to give a dozen lectures to popularize the Congress cause. The first lecture was held at Amritsar in August and was extensively advertised. When the speaker appeared in the fifteen hundred capacity hall, the audience numbered less than seventy. Nevertheless, the *Tribune* of 16 August gave a misleading account of a full

hall and great enthusiasm. Munshiram wrote an indignant letter, stating the facts, but the paper chose not to publish it. That spelled the premature end of his propaganda tour. Munshiram wrote about the Lahore session in his *Inside Congress*. He ridiculed the method of 'electing' delegates, whoever was present got enlisted, a process that continued till the opening day. He also described the pathetic way in which Congress bolstered up the numbers of Muslims in order to counteract Syed Ahmed Khan's opposition: most Muslims enlisted were local religious preachers, who came to enjoy the free food, for which other Congressmen had to pay! For Munshiram the high point of the Congress fair was his meeting with the eminent leaders Gokhale and Ranade. Their intellectual power and honesty made a great impression on him. For the rest, the session disgusted Munshiram, and he had no connection with the Congress for the next six years.¹⁰³

Kanya Mahavidyalay

At the end of 1888 Munshiram had withdrawn his daughter from the Christian school, and decided that the Jullundur Aryas should set up a girls' school of their own. In 1889 he started an important series of articles about female education in the second issue of the *Saddharmpracharak*, entitled '*Adhūrā Insāf*', 'half justice', in which he pleaded for the education of women on the basis of equal rights of males and females.¹⁰⁴ The opposition was strong, and the going very hard; the first three attempts fell through mostly on account of the lack of pupils.¹⁰⁵ But finally, in July 1891, firm foundations were laid and the school was off to a good start. The *Tribune* of 16 March 1892 reported the opening of a Refuse Fund, and its issue of 6 July of the same year reported with praise that about forty girls had been enrolled. In fact, that same year Devraj announced that they were hoping to open a girls' High School, for which 250,000 rupees would be needed.¹⁰⁶ In October 1893 an incident occurred at the Amritsar anniversary: after the customary D.A.V. appeal some members tried to collect money for the Jullundur school.¹⁰⁷ The whole project was viewed very unfavourably by the D.A.V. management, especially since it could have become a serious competitor for scarce funds. Although Devraj was from the beginning the main organizer of the school project, which remained forever linked with his name, Munshiram was

closely involved, another reason why the D.A.V. faction would not look upon him as a friend and ally.

By the end of 1893 Munshiram was a very different man from the half-hearted, callow youth who had entered the Samaj eight years earlier. He had gradually thrown off all the bonds that shackled him to a life of purposeless laziness. He had built up a good lawyer's practice, but ended up by distancing himself from high professional ambitions. He had become practically a full-time Arya, and the acknowledged leader of the most numerous faction of the Panjab Arya Samaj. His influence was considerable, supported by his great popularity, his constant travelling around the province, his presidency of the Pratinidhi Sabha, and his popular *Saddharmpracharak*. He was deeply involved both as initiator and leader in the two strong movements of *prachār* and female education. He had become a man of action, but also a man of vision whose enthusiasm was fed by the conviction of living at a crucial time and being called to a high vocation.

CHAPTER III

Radical leader's see-saw of initiatives and disenchantments, 1894-1901

'My life was no more my own. It now belonged to all people'

Years of Consolidation, 1894-96

In the early months of 1894 the drama of the split reached its climactic stage, which would decide who was to control the D.A.V. Managing Committee. Now that there were two branches of the Samaj in Lahore, the overriding question was which one had the right to the substantial representation reserved on that Committee for the Lahore Arya Samaj. When the Committee met on 24 February Munshiram made his moves: first he tried to have this question postponed, and next to have all Lahore members excluded from the discussion. When both these proposals were rejected, he left the meeting with his followers, thus breaking the necessary quorum. However, that same evening the meeting was reconvened by his opponents, who had managed to restore the quorum by persuading Rai Labdha Ram to switch his allegiance. The resolution was carried that the Anarkali branch was the true Lahore Samaj entitled to representation. It was all over, bar the shouting.

At the time of the D.A.V. Society meeting of 24 May, the Mahatma party made a last desperate attempt, marching threateningly to the College. But the gates were closed on them, and ugly scenes ensued. Munshiram decided this was not the proper method, and the following day his party stayed away. Thus the D.A.V. management remained within the firm grip of the College party.² However, as they could not survive on the support of Lahore alone, and needed assistance from the rest of the province, in August they founded their own provincial body, which they called the Panjab Arya Pradeshik Sabha. They enrolled member Samajes, and developed their own school system: the opening of their Sandas High School in Jullundur was part of that strategy. Thus the contest for members

and branches between the two provincial bodies spread all over the Panjab.³

Munshiram as President of the Panjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha was now the formal leader of the Mahatma party, and immediately threw all his energies into those issues his group had been fighting for. He gave the following advice:

Abandon your desire to go back to the College Society, contribute all you can to the *Ved Prachār* fund, master your strength for the cause of female education, take care of the *upadeshaks*, keep aloof from the Mulraj party, or the cultured party, and put all your energy into *Dharmprachār*.⁴

In June he proposed a *Ved Prachār* fund in the Sabha; a sub-committee was formed, whose report was submitted in August, and accepted in September by the full committee. Munshiram played a leading role in formulating the extremely ambitious proposals, with an anticipated budget of one million rupees: six hundred thousand for preachers, three hundred thousand for a teachers' school, fifty thousand for a Vedic ashram, thirty thousand for publications, and twenty thousand for a Vedic library. The Sabha had obviously decided to put most of its energy and resources into preaching, and in fact it clearly stated for the first time that *Ved Prachār* was the chief duty of the Arya Samaj, and that the individual branches should not launch separate appeals, but all work for the *Ved Prachār* Fund. The target was hopelessly beyond reach, especially as only the really fervent Aryas were prepared to part with their cash, and progress was consequently very slow.⁵

The *Upadeshak* class which had been started in Gurudatta's time was brought over to Jullundur in 1895, under the direct supervision of Munshiram, and renamed *Vaidik Pāthshālā*. The proposed curriculum was extensive: three years' study was planned, covering the *Vedas* and *Vedāngas*, science and philosophy, *Āyur-veda*, and English. The students were expected to live in an ashram with their teachers, among whom were three *sādhus*. The initial enrolment of twenty-six was very encouraging. Here Munshiram gained some experience for his later educational endeavours. However, the school moved to Gujaranwala towards the end of the year; the growing burden of the girls' school was more than enough for the Jullundur Samaj. But there was another reason: some Aryas, particularly the very active Rallaram of Gujaranwala, did not like to see all the power of the Samaj concentrated in

Jullundur. It is the first sign of frictions that would aggravate later.⁶

Munshiram was not only involved at the organizational level, he himself became one of the most active preachers of the Samaj. In March 1894 he went on a preaching tour in Kurukshetra, accompanied by Lekhram;⁷ and in August that year on another that brought him to Sialkot, Lahore, Ludhiana, Phillaur, Ambala, Karnal, Pampat, and Delhi. During that year Lekhram resided at Jullundur, and their intimacy grew apace, as Indra recalled, 'they were like bloodbrothers'.⁸ They often acted as a team: in March 1895 they were together in Delhi, in April in Malerkotla, in May at Bhera. In August Munshiram recalled Lekhram to Jullundur, where the College party was preparing a big propaganda push.⁹ During June and July Munshiram was on *dharmyātrā* again through Wazirabad, Gujarat, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi, Khishalgarh, Kohat, Bandu, Derainalkhan, and Multan, and in 1896 he toured the Hoshiarpur area and also Rajputana.¹⁰ All this travel was not directed only to preaching but was also part of the Mahatma party's fight for control over local branches.¹¹

In early 1894 the proposed development of the Jullundur Girls' School into a High School became the subject of a hot debate, aired in the local papers.¹² Among many others, Lajpat Rai opposed this move, writing several letters to the *Tribune* in March and April, arguing along the following lines.

I am always for an advance, but a sure and steady advance which may be consistent with the interests of education in general both of boys and girls. That of the former, in my opinion, precedes that of the latter as a *class*. Sufficient primary education for the latter as a class must be assured before we proceed to apply our means to the high education of a few of them.¹³

Letters to the papers shuffled back and forth, but the movement was not to be stemmed. The number of enrolments, so long disappointing, started to increase, and by February 1895 the school had nearly a hundred pupils.¹⁴ In March a boarding house was inaugurated, the Kanya Ashram, and by the end of that same year it had attracted girls not only from the Panjab, but also from the N.W. Provinces and even from Poona.¹⁵ This showed that some people were now ready to trust the school even with the moral education and protection of their daughters. The *Indian Social Reformer* commented with high praise that it was the first such institution in India.¹⁶

In April that year the Jullundur Arya Samaj decided to build a proper school for the girls, who till then had been shunted around about five times as the need for space grew.¹⁷ As the school expanded the burden became too heavy for the Jullundur Samaj alone to bear; in January 1896 responsibility for the school was transferred to a group of branches. Any Samaj that managed to collect five hundred rupees for its fund would acquire the right to representation on its governing body. In June, Devraj and Munshiram finally attained their goal: the inauguration of the Kanya Mahavidyalay High School for girls.¹⁸ Its slow but steady growth was to transform it into a major institution for higher female education.

Munshiram's first two years as President of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, 1893-4, had been eventful and decisive. In May 1895 he made another attempt to heal the rift in the Samaj, as recorded in the pages of his journal. His proposal for reconciliation contained six points:

1. Meat-eating let there be an end to its propaganda.
2. D A V College let there be room for the teaching of Sanskrit, let there be promotion of Brahmacharya Ashram school; let there be on the Managing Committee a fifty-fifty representation of both parties.
3. The Arya Pratinidhi Sabha let it be registered and proper arrangements be made for oral and written propaganda.
4. Let the past be forgotten and love reign.
5. Let there be equal partnership in female education.
6. Let the desire for power be abandoned.¹⁹

After that vain attempt, he took in hand the reorganization of the Sabha. His experiences at Lahore had taught him how important it was for this body to ensure its safety from any take-over bids. New rules were approved in November, when the number of affiliated branches was forty-eight. The rules for new admissions were carefully framed to screen out applicants who might endanger the leadership from inside. As a result, during 1895 only half of the seventy applicants gained admission. That same year, in December, the Sabha was officially registered under a government act, so as to ensure the legality of its holdings and to protect them by law. The objectives of the Sabha were officially stated to be the following:

1. To found a school for the teaching of the *Vedas* and ancient Sanskrit works and the instruction of Arya preachers.

2. To open a library of religious and scientific works for the use of the common people.
3. To provide for the publication of pamphlets to propagate Vedic teachings.
4. To arrange for the preaching of the Vedic *dharma* in the Panjab and also in other localities.
5. To study methods for the propagation of the Vedic *dharma*, and to implement them.²⁰

1897. The death of Lekhram—A temporary reunion

On 6 March 1897 Pandit Lekhram was murdered by a Muslim in his house in Lahore. The Aryas were shocked to the core, and many Hindus sympathized in horror. Claims and counter-claims of a Muslim conspiracy flew about, and false rumours of new threats and even other murders. Communal tension rose to flash-point, so that even a meeting of leading Hindus, Muslims, and Aryas was arranged with the Deputy Commissioner to discuss the unrest and ways of restoring peace.²¹ In their shocked reaction, many Aryas went too far and started extravagantly claiming for the Pandit a status of sanctity, wisdom, and achievement, which many felt he did not deserve.²²

Although Munshiram himself from the start acknowledged that the Pandit, 'was not without his faults',²³ it was a savage personal blow to him: in the last four years he had constantly worked as a team with Lekhram, and had published most of his writings in his Press. As the Aryas of both parties stood around the bier of their first martyr, he made an impassioned plea for reunion, and took a public vow, 'if even now the two parties do not unite, I will give up my work in the Arya Samaj'.²⁴ In the emotional atmosphere the Aryas relented, and the following Sunday the Lahore Samaj gathered again under one roof, under the presidency of Hansraj. Munshiram was a major force in working out the compromise for reunification. It provided for a three-year power of veto for the College party in the Sabha, and for the Mahatmas in the D A V Society, and for a ban on the propaganda in favour of meat-eating. The reunited Lahore Samaj Committee would provide equal representation for both parties under the presidency of Hansraj, and in fund-raising equal importance would be given to the College and the *Prachār* funds. The branches in the Panjab that had split up were also to be reunited.²⁵ In the last case, Jullundur gave the lead: the Anglo-Sanskrit High School was amalga-

mated with the Doaba High School, with Lala Sunderdas as headmaster and Munshiram as secretary.²⁶

However, the emotional atmosphere had not dispelled, but only submerged the deep-seated suspicions and antagonisms. The College party, who felt they had most to lose, held back. They were afraid of being taken over, notwithstanding the five-point agreement. In fact, in objective terms that agreement was certainly weighted in favour of the other party. They postponed the dissolution of their own provincial body, and kept their journals tightly under their control. Very soon oral and written incriminations again started to fly about. Nevertheless, a joint anniversary celebration was held in Lahore in November, with speeches from both sides and appeals for the different funds.²⁷ But in December the D.A.V. Society went against the agreement and altered its rules. The following January the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha retaliated by voting to exclude all Aryas who held that meat-eating was approved by the *Vedas*.²⁸ Munshiram warned the Aryas in his paper that 'certain persons are endeavouring to sow the seed of discord among the Aryas' and appealed that nobody should act 'disgracefully'. He had reason to do so, because in his own Jullundur a running battle was on for possession of the school-house, which led to its closure by the authorities.²⁹ In February the Lahore parties again held separate meetings.³⁰ The break was total again. The mistrust was too deep to allow for a lasting reconciliation.

Initiatives and disenchantments, 1898-1900

For the first twenty years of its existence the Panjab Arya Samaj had remained extremely moderate in the sense that its members were very reluctant to put any of the social principles of the Samaj into hard practice. Their social and ritual way of life was still utterly dominated by what one could call caste orthodoxy.³¹ Ten years earlier Munshiram, as a recent convert, had dared to suggest that marriages of Aryas should be arranged not according to caste but according to qualities, and he had immediately been dubbed an 'extreme radical'.³² By the mid-nineties, when the split was a fact and the two sections were concentrating on their respective programmes, a group of Aryas of the Mahatma section started calling for a 'radical' approach, which meant an attempt to make

ideal and reality come together in the social life of the Aryas.

The first concrete move was made by the extreme radical Dr Chiranjilal. He rightly opined that the temporary reunion of the two parties was based not on principle but on sentiment, and he formed a separate organization, which came to be called the Arya Shiromani Sabha, because the initiation ceremony included shaving the head. Their aim was immediately to implement among their initiates all the principles and directives proclaimed by Swami Dayananda. They wanted to remove all traces of purdah and establish families where man and wife were real companions. All ritual had to be purely Vedic, Aryas should marry only other Aryas, and all caste regulations should be completely disregarded. This attempt at organizing the radicals was very short-lived as their leaders left for England before much other than the formulation of ideals could be achieved.³³

But soon a new organization took its place, the Arya Bhratri Sabha, whose objectives were very similar: the total abrogation of all caste rules including dietary regulations, marriage according to the four classes, not along caste lines; introduction of the Vedic ceremonies of Dayananda's *Sanskārvidhi*. They added a new idea to this familiar formula—a *gurukul*-type school was to be organized in order to train children of members properly in accordance with the educational philosophy of Swami Dayananda. From 1896 onwards this group of enthusiasts wrote about its ideals and plans mainly in the *Arya Parika*. However, within the Samaj the opposition was too strong for their plans to take a concrete living shape.³⁴

Yet another organization of the same type was started at the end of 1897, which called itself the Arya Dharm Sabha.³⁵ Its members were greatly concerned with the condition of women, and wanted to fight the evils of the restriction of women by purdah. In their anti-caste stand they went even further than their predecessors, holding that it was unnecessary for anybody to submit to a *shuddhi* ceremony in order to become an Arya.³⁶

These three attempts at organizing the most radical elements in the Samaj never got much further than being tentative trials, soon discouraged and effectively stopped by the pressures of the caste-dominated society. But even if they were ineffective in achieving a 'new society', they were effective in publicizing their ideals, thus bringing about among the Mahatmas a continuous

and often bitter controversy about the meaning and the limits of radicalism.³⁷

Munshiram himself was by inclination a radical, and had urged from the early days of his conversion that earnest convictions could not survive unless they were put into practice. The articles that appeared over the years in his *Saddharmpracharak* were strongly in favour of that approach. They contained various appeals to the Aryas: to disregard dietary caste-regulations, to put an end to child-marriage, to open an Arya register to facilitate proper Arya marriages, to cut wedding expenses, to stop the Hindu custom of *Shrāddh*, etc.³⁸ Yet why did Munshiram not himself become involved in the successive radical organizations? First of all because, as President of the Pratinidhi Sabha, his responsibility was for the whole Samaj, and in his position he could not identify himself with one small controversial organization within the Samaj. Secondly, the special approach of the radical bodies would not have been to his taste. He could not see how a small community of radicals cutting itself off from the rest of society could really become a decisive power in the transformation of that society.

His awkward position of one who was a radical by conviction, but not in favour of the current organization of radicalism, often drew fire from both sides. The radicals of the Bhratri Sabha criticized him when his first daughter was married within her caste with all traditional pomp, as described by Indra.³⁹ When in 1900 he arranged an inter-caste marriage at his home between a brahmin girl and a non-brahmin doctor, he was attacked from both sides.⁴⁰ Some complained that if he were a real radical, why had he not arranged his own daughter's wedding in the same way. Others felt that the radicalism of the act was injurious to the Arya Samaj.⁴¹ Munshiram effectively answered the first objection when a year later his second daughter, Hemant Kumari, was married to the Arora, Dr Sukhdeo.⁴²

There was one item on the programme of the radicals which Munshiram took up in earnest from 1897 onwards: the need for a new educational institution for the training of 'real' Aryas, to be called the Gurukul. The first concrete proposals were written out by Munshiram in a series of articles in his *Saddharmpracharak* in June 1897. He put the argument for the Gurukul concisely, in the following words: 'Without the establishment of the *āshramas*

the establishment of the *varnas* is not possible, because the *varna* is based on the *āshrama*. . . . Without a gurukul, how can the *āshramas* be instituted?⁴³ The reformation of caste-society had to come, he said, through the re-establishment of the ideal stages of life as proclaimed in the *Vedas*, and that could only be started with youth. In other words, Munshiram anticipated the emergence of the ideal Arya society not through radical institutions, but through the education from below of a new Arya élite that was to be the vital function of the Gurukul.

Opposition to this scheme could naturally be expected from the College party, who indeed were very dense about it: it was but a silly impossible dream. But within the Mahatma party too the opposition was strong and vocal. Some Aryas, among whom there were very dedicated and influential members, were opposed to the idea because of the financial burdens such a venture would put on the Pratimdhī Sabha, to the detriment of its proclaimed first duty, the preaching of religion. Others had serious objections of an educational or practical nature. Who would possibly agree to send their children to a 'jungle school' to be educated, and how were good teachers going to be recruited for such a school? Some felt that the mixture of Sanskrit learning and modern science proposed for the Gurukul was impracticable. Others questioned the assertion that teachers were able to impart a better moral education than parents, and some put forward the very pragmatic view that at that time educational needs were adequately taken care of by existing institutions. All these objections were serious and were strongly and competently argued in the Arya papers.⁴⁴

After Lekhram's death a fund had been started to continue the propaganda work of the Pandit by publishing his writings, and to provide for his widow and his mother.⁴⁵ Munshiram wholeheartedly took up the task of collecting subscriptions, but the response was much more lukewarm than he had hoped. Although in the first shock over the vile murder, as rumours flew around the Panjab⁴⁶ and communal tension mounted, Hindus sympathized with the Aryas, soon not only the Muslim papers but also the Hindu ones started writing against the Pandit. They condemned the 'excessive praise' that was being heaped upon a man who did not deserve it, who was in fact 'a most bigoted Arya'. They stated that the Hindus should wake up and refuse to contribute to funds

that certainly would be used to attack both Hindus and Sikhs 'in the Lekhram tradition'⁴⁷

Opposition to the Lekhram fund came also from within the Arya Samaj. Munshiram and the Sabha were condemned for not prosecuting the Muslim papers which were printing vile accusations about the late Pandit. Munshiram replied that such action could only be taken by relatives.⁴⁸ Many Aryas felt that a new fund was not warranted when there were so many other unfinished, unfinanced, and urgent projects in hand.⁴⁹ In fact, the little enthusiasm there was for the fund, whose target was only fifty thousand rupees, soon cooled down.⁵⁰ By July 1897 the continuous attacks of the influential *Sanatan Dharm Gazette* grew vicious, and complaints about lack of subscriptions became a regular feature of the *Saddharmpracharak*. The October issue stated that *prachār* work had fallen greatly:

The zeal of the Aryas for the spread of their religion seems to have cooled down of late. The lecturers have stopped preaching the Arya religion, rich men of the Samaj have shut up their money in their safes, the *Ati* fund and four *ama* fund yields little or no income now, while the income of the *Ved Prachār* Fund this year fell to less than one half of what it was last year.⁵¹

After about two years only half of the Lekhram fund target had been collected.⁵² It was a great disappointment to Munshiram, the prime mover. But worse was to come.

In mid-1898 the *Arya Gazette* launched a full-scale attack on Munshiram personally for mismanagement of the Lekhram fund. It was alleged that the Pandit's widow had not been paid her monthly allowance, that no house had been provided for her yet; that the fund was being used to make Munshiram's own press a flourishing concern, that the thousands of rupees realized by the reprint of Lekhram's writings had found their way into the accounts of the Pratinidhi Sabha and into Munshiram's press.⁵³ It was reported that dissatisfaction over the use of the fund and the sales of Lekhram's pamphlets was also voiced within the Mahatma party. In January 1900 these accusations were repeated, together with another that Munshiram had used ten thousand rupees belonging to the Pratinidhi Sabha for his own purposes.⁵⁴ Munshiram refuted all these accusations in detail in his *Saddharmpracharak* of 2 February 1900.⁵⁵ The breakdown of the temporary reunification of the Samaj had brought an increase in bitterness, leading to vicious

attacks on personalities, occasionally to actual brawls, and to suspicions of every move the other party made.⁵⁶ Within the Mahatma party too disputes were on the increase, and Munshiram was often caught in between the firing lines. Somehow he had lost that clear leadership initiative he had exercised in the crisis before and immediately after the split.

In the meantime yet another 'radical' cause was coming to the forefront, that of the 'purification' of low caste people. Although the radical group had not been able to realize their objectives, their discussions and agitation had prepared a lot of people for support of the *shuddhi* movement, as Graham commented.

And when the closing years of the nineteenth century brought a series of famines and pestilences which made difficult the lot of those submerged classes who always live on the verge of starvation and witnessed the gathering of many of those under Christian care under the Christian fold, the Bhratri Sabha with other Arya Samajists raised the cry that something radical must be done . . .⁵⁷

The community of the Rahtia Sikhs, considered outcaste by the other Sikhs, had been trying since 1896 to elevate their status, but had been unsuccessful with the Sikh Sabhas. In June 1899 they came to Munshiram, and his proposal to receive these Rahtias into the Samaj was passed by the Jullundur Samaj committee on 22 August that year, fixing 8 October as the date for the purification ceremony. However, a lot of Aryas had second thoughts, and the ceremony did not take place. A second committee motion later that year was again reneged by the branch, although Munshiram could dominate the executive, he was outvoted in the general branch meetings, which blocked the admission of the Rahtias for a whole year.⁵⁸

Munshiram then handed the Rahtias over to the Lahore branch. On 3 June 1900 a first group of nineteen Rahtias were purified at Lahore, followed by even more within a week.⁵⁹ The outcry among the Sikhs was vehement, and it was the beginning of a full-scale enmity between the two groups. There was even a false rumour in the *Tribune* that the Sikhs had massacred the Jullundur Aryas and that Munshiram was in hospital in a critical condition.⁶⁰ Munshiram vigorously defended his actions against the accusations of the Sikhs, who considered him 'especially responsible for the change in Arya Samaj tactics'.⁶¹ Finally the Jullundur Samaj relented, and in August 1900 also admitted a number of Rahtias.⁶²

Once more Munshiram had been in the forefront of an initiative that was to shake the Arya Samaj in the coming years as thousands of low-caste people would on purification enter the Samaj and profoundly change its caste-composition.

Throughout these years Munshiram's stature and popularity among the people had grown, and received a considerable boost as a result of the famous Gopinath affair. Pandit Gopinath was at the time a prominent figure among the orthodox, secretary of the Sanatan Dharm Sabha, editor of the *Sanatan Dharm Gazette*, and co-proprietor of the Urdu *Akhbār-ān*. He was also a virulent opponent of the Arya Samaj. He took out a libel action in connection with materials about him published in the *Saddharmprachārak* issues of February 1901. The defendants were Munshiram as publisher, Lala Wazir Chand as author of the articles, and Lala Basti Ram as assistant-manager of the press. The case dragged on over three months and was extensively written up in the local press. The final verdict of 2 September 1901 was a resounding victory for Munshiram and brought humiliation and ruin to Gopinath. The magistrate did not mince his words when describing the real Gopinath: 'an adventurous upstart . . . little better than a bastard in the eyes of high caste Hindus', 'ever bold to incriminate and to libel, but . . . a cringing coward when held up by the ear', with 'a special predilection for obscenity', whose 'acts were in accordance with his obscene writings'. In fact, the magistrate stated:

I cannot help thinking that the accused have earned the thanks of all honourable Hindus by their courageous exposure of a man whose persistent policy has been to get money and power by hypocrisy, falsehood and blackmail, and more especially of those more orthodox Hindus whose ancient religion he has defiled and debased to fill his pocket while pretending to uphold and defend it.⁶³

Munshiram walked out of court to a triumphal hero's reception.⁶⁴

Yet these were basically hard, trying years for Munshiram. He had risen decisively to the leadership of the Mahatmas, created a new centre of Arya power in the Pratinidhi Sabha, and dominated the scene by his presidency. But the continuous stirrings of radicalism within his section had caused divisions, and whatever cause he dedicated his enthusiasm to exposed him to criticism from one side or the other. Although many of his personal ideals were similar to those of the radical elements, he did not approve

of their immediate aims and tactics and kept aloof from their societies. His involvement with the Lekhram fund turned sour, and his courageous initiative in the *shuddhi* of the Rahtas antagonized some people. Whatever he did, wherever he turned, he ran into the opposition of influential Aryas or factions, and his overall leadership suffered. He stood out as a man of daring, initiative, and total dedication, for which people admired him. But being the President of a body riddled with dissension was difficult for him, because that function needed the purely political abilities of tactics, compromise, and reconciliation, which were not part of his mentality.

One must add to these troubles which increasingly isolated him, the loss of the two closest friends he had. The death of Lekhram had taken away his collaborator and confidant, the one who loved him like a brother. Another very close friend had been Devraj: together they had started the Jullundur Samaj and built it up into one of the foremost in the province, and together they had founded the Kanya Mahavidyalay. Moreover their families were linked by marriage: Munshiram's late wife was Devraj's sister. Indra, in his reminiscences, is the only one to recall the sad break between the two. The first sign was when the children overheard a violent quarrel in their father's study between their father, Devraj, and the headmaster of the Doaba High School, Master Lakshmandas. The children did not fully understand the precise reason for the dispute, but gathered that their father sided with Lakshmandas against Devraj in a matter concerning the Girls' School. The quarrel was not resolved, and the discussion, says Indra, 'with time became wider and deeper'.⁶⁵ It destroyed a personal and family relationship that was the very pivot of Munshiram's life in Jullundur. Thus Munshiram not only lost effective leadership but also lost the two people closest to him. No wonder that at this stage he chose the option of devoting all his energies to the new dream of the Gurukul.

The birth-pangs of a new dream

Slowly there had grown among the Panjab Aryas a pool of supporters for the idea of the Gurukul. Its establishment was included in the original general plan of *Ved Prachār*, and was also part of the programme of the Arya Bhratri Sabha. But the first tangible

and substantial support came after a series of articles by Munshiram in his paper in June 1897.⁶⁶ An Arya from Shrigovindpur announced in that paper on 27 August that Lal Bishen Das, Vice-President of the local branch would give a donation of one thousand rupees, and Lala Mohan Lal a plot of land and fifty rupees annually, towards the support of a Gurukul.⁶⁷ Munshiram grasped the opportunity. He went to the local anniversary a few weeks later, where the decision was taken to formally propose in the Pratinidhi Sabha the opening of a Gurukul.⁶⁸ This was the signal for extensive discussion of the proposal in the Arya papers, to which reference was made earlier.⁶⁹ The promoters were no doubt helped by the fact that not only were members of the D.A.V. group ridiculing the idea, but they were successfully pushing the opening of their own affiliated schools in the Panjab. In 1896 they had started such schools in Multan, Jullundur, and Simla; in 1897 in Ambala City and Jalalpur Jattan in Gujarat district; and in 1898 in Ferozpur and Karor.⁷⁰ On 26 November 1898 Munshiram's motion to open a Gurukul was formally accepted by the general meeting of the Pratinidhi Sabha, and it was decided that 'the work should commence as soon as eight thousand rupees had been collected for the purpose'.⁷¹

The original idea of the Gurukul was justified and expatiated on at length in *The Rules and the Scheme of Studies of the Gurukula*, composed on behalf of the Panjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha.⁷² The educational aim of the institution was to produce a truly 'national' adult, who realized that the key to Arya greatness was to be found in the *Vedas* and in ancient Indian history, who was prepared to structure his life according to that Vedic ideal, and devote his formative years to its study. The main thrust of the instruction was therefore to be the study of the *Vedas* and of all the linguistic and historical disciplines necessary for that study. Since such a programme was not to be found in any contemporary school, neither in the traditional Sanskrit ones nor in those run by the D.A.V., the establishment of a Gurukul for that purpose was of paramount necessity.

The existing schools were deficient not only in their scheme of studies but also in their methods: their teachers were badly-paid, indifferent functionaries; and their location in the towns continually subjected the pupils to all kinds of pernicious influences, both moral and physical. The Gurukul's teachers would be in the

full sense of the words *in loco parentis*, taking responsibility for the physical, intellectual, and moral growth of their pupils. The students would be isolated from a bad environment, and allowed to develop physically and mentally in natural surroundings. They would be taught to think for themselves, not just to memorize, as the prevailing examination system tended to demand.

These aims and methods were given concrete form in a scheme of studies and a set of rules. The syllabus was ambitious: it envisaged twelve years in the lower section, plus six years in the 'College' section equivalent to tertiary studies. In fact this was never completely implemented. In 1908 the pupils who had finished the tenth class moved to the tertiary section, thus reducing the first part to ten years only; and in early 1912 the first students graduated after tertiary training effectively reduced to four years.⁷³

The major subjects in the lower section were Sanskrit and Vedic studies. However, English and modern science were also to be taught, and their inclusion in the syllabus was argued as follows:

It is impossible not to take into account the existing situation—the present condition of our country. Apart from the fact that the study of English, as an essential part in any educational scheme, is a political necessity for India, the truth cannot be gainsaid that useful information can be had on every conceivable subject embodied in the almost inexhaustible literature of that language. Any one of us who now-a-days wishes to intelligently and successfully pursue a line of thought or action in any walk of life will find himself handicapped if he were ignorant of English, on the other hand, a fair knowledge of that language will materially help him on in his course in life. Moreover, we cannot overlook the fact that for the study, to advantage, of modern sciences and of technical subjects, the study of English is, and will remain for some time to come a *sine qua non*. The study of English, to a limited extent, is also necessary for the preachers of the Vedic Dharma, who have not infrequently to preach to the English-educated classes.⁷⁴

It was decided that English should be introduced only in the ninth form because it was essential that the students first acquired proficiency in Sanskrit and Hindi.

For the study of Sanskrit the scheme was extremely ambitious. The school section would give the student a proficiency 'far ahead even of the courses presented for the M.A. examination of the Calcutta University'.⁷⁵ The curriculum would not only prepare the student for advanced Vedic study, but also give him a thorough grounding in the thought of Swami Dayananda. From early on the pupils would study *Dharma Pustakas*, which would consist of

selections from Dayananda's minor works, and in later years they would tackle the *Satyārth Prakāśh*. This Arya ideology would be reinforced by books on Indian history especially written for that purpose.

In the College section the students would be allowed to specialize. Two main streams were provided for. The full Vedic course would lead to deep specialization in Vedic lore, but those taking this line also had to take one of the professionally oriented courses: economics, agriculture, or Ayurvedic medicine. This compulsory combination indicates the practical thinking of the initiators of the Gurukul. The alternative line available would specialize in English, combined with either Mathematics, Science, or Western Philosophy. But here too the students would have to do Vedic studies: they were expected to specialize in at least one of the four *Vedas*.

The scheme was extremely ambitious, and it shows that from the very start the organizers did not underestimate the importance of English and European science. Neither did they envisage training Vedic scholars who completely buried their heads in ancient tomes. Everyone was required to take up some professional course. In the next chapter it will become clear how Munshiram attempted to realize these aims and to implement that scheme, and the difficulties and controversies that arose during that attempt.

The November 1898 decision of the Pratinidhi Sabha to open a Gurukul could easily have remained a paper decision, shelved among the many other ambitious schemes abandoned. With both the Lekhram and the *Ved Prachār* funds at a very low ebb and discredited by innuendoes of mismanagement, the collection of eight thousand rupees for a scheme which many Aryas felt to be impracticable or unnecessary seemed to be a near-impossible task. In the following few months Munshiram got involved in the Rahtia affair, and by the middle of 1899 nothing at all had been done about the Gurukul. Munshiram, in his bold and near-reckless manner, now took the plunge: he would personally collect the money necessary. He publicly announced in August 1899 that he would go on a begging tour for the Gurukul, and that he had taken a vow not to set foot in his own house again until he had collected no less than thirty thousand rupees.⁷⁴ Munshiram had staked everything on the Gurukul, and from that moment there was no looking back for him. He was not satisfied with aiming for the sum of eight thousand rupees suggested by the Sabha. He seemed

to have vowed the impossible at a time of famine, when other Arya funds were scraping the barrel and competing for the few rupees available. But he achieved the impossible: within eight months he collected forty thousand rupees.

On 26 August he set out on his first begging trip which lasted five weeks and brought him through more than twenty different townships, and which realized some eight thousand rupees. His passionate eloquence and his popularity were paying off. The second and third trips covered whatever corners were left of the Panjab, and the fourth journey brought him farther afield—into the U.P., and into Hyderabad in the South. By April 1900 it was all over, to the great astonishment of most observers. On his return a triumphal procession was taken out in Lahore, and this astounding achievement of single-minded dedication earned him the title of Mahatma.

Now that the financial problems had been solved, concrete steps to set up the Gurukul went quickly ahead. On 16 May 1900 the Gurukul was officially inaugurated at Gujranwala with twenty boys, among whom were Munshiram's sons Harischandra and Indra. On 26 December the Pratinidhi Sabha formally approved the Gurukul rules formulated by Munshiram. In October the following year Munshi Amarsingh made the Sabha a donation of land at the village of Kangri near Hardwar for the Gurukul. Four months later teachers and pupils arrived to pioneer 'Gurukul Kangri', under the leadership of Mahatma Munshiram.

Writings

During these eight years Munshiram devoted more and more time to writing. Foremost were his regular contributions to his own *Saddharmpracharak*, which permanently moulded his writing style. It was the style of the journalist reacting to the world around him, responding to the needs of the day. At the same time it was also the style of the preacher always intent on convincing his readers. Although much of his writing was of necessity polemical, Munshiram never stooped to the gutter-press tactics so prevalent in his day. Writing literary or research works had no place in his endeavours. In the later years of this period he composed three books, translated Dayananda's Poona lectures into Urdu, and edited a collection of hymns.

In 1895 he published a twenty-four page pamphlet entitled *Kshātra Dharm Pālan kā Gat-māmidi Maukā*, 'An unusual opportunity to defend the *dharma* of the khatris' ⁷⁷ It was written in answer to an event that had deeply stirred the Hindu community, when Diwan Sant Ramdas arranged the remarriage of his daughter, who had been married in early childhood, but had been widowed long before that marriage could be consummated. Many orthodox Hindus argued that this remarriage of a widow was against Hindu *dharma*, and the Chopra community of Akalgarh published a treatise pressing for the total excommunication of the Diwan. Munshiram undertook his defence. His pamphlet contains a detailed analysis and criticism of the treatise of the Akalgarh Chopras.

First he showed that the harsh condemnation was far from universal among the Hindus. Next he accused the Hindu community of horrendous hypocrisy: he enumerated concrete instances of incest, abortion, adultery, drunkenness, and theft committed by high-caste Hindus without ever calling upon their head even the faintest threat of sanction from their caste. In the main section he then argued that the remarriage of the virgin widow did not run counter to religion: in fact it was not really a 'second' marriage since the first had never been completed. In support of this he extensively commented on texts from the *Vedas* and the *Manusmriti*. The argument that such a marriage was unlawful because it was against established Hindu custom or tradition, was countered in an interesting manner. Munshiram argued that the British judiciary in India, starting with Sir William Jones, had given a typically British interpretation of the Hindu concept of *āchār*, taking it to mean the same as custom or customary law in British jurisprudence. This translation, however, was not in line with the Hindu legal tradition, which looked upon *āchār* not as 'customary law', but, rather as 'general conduct'. The pamphlet closed with a passionate appeal to all Hindus to do all they could to accept remarriage of widows in all cases where the Hindu religion allowed it.

When Lekhram died in 1897 he left behind an enormous collection of notes, the result of a decade of research into the life of Swami Dayananda. The Pratinidhi Sabha appointed Lala Atmaram to prepare the manuscript for early publication, and when the work was published towards the end of that year, it contained a long introduction by Munshiram.⁷⁸ He rightly pointed out that this

was not a proper biography for two reasons. Firstly, it was very incomplete. To illustrate this, Munshiram included a lengthy account of his own personal contacts with the Swami in Bareilly, and he appealed to all Aryas who had similar additional information to communicate it to the Sabha.

The second reason for the book's incompleteness was that it was only a collection of primary sources without integration or perspective. One of the main tasks of the biographer of a great man was to put him into the broad historical perspective so that the importance of his life and mission became apparent. In order to help supplement this omission Munshiram dedicated the rest of his introduction to precisely that topic: to indicate the importance of Dayananda's mission in nineteenth century India. Using a broad canvas of Indian history, he showed how a new era was inaugurated by a giant historical figure, who brings the dawn of a new age and expounds the philosophy that will dominate it. Gautama Buddha was such a man, and so was Shankarāchārya. In the nineteenth century the condition of India had sunk to its nadir; it was a fearful time.

When deceived by a scrap of English learning we all doubted if there was any wisdom in our Sanskrit literature, when the Christian missionaries taught India's youth that the wisdom of the *Vedas* was spread in India by the descendants of the patriarch Noah, when Vedic *mantras* were intermingled with Israeli incantations. . . .⁷⁹

In other words, the fundamental reason for the terrible decline was the total neglect and ignorance of the *Vedas*. That was the time when Swami Dayananda was sent, 'the true servant of God', 'the messenger of peace', who dispelled the darkness with the broad sunlight of the original *Vedas*.⁸⁰

It is no wonder that Munshiram's first book, published the following year, dealt with the interpretation of the *Vedas*. It was called *Subeh-o-mid*, 'Morning of Hope', and ran to about two hundred pages.⁸¹ Its dominant argument was that Swami Dayananda's method of Vedic interpretation was the proper one for understanding those treasures of wisdom. The volume criticized other contemporary Indian commentators on the *Vedas* such as Rajendra-lal Mitra, R.C. Dutt, and Pandit Udayprakash Mitra. Their commentaries fell down in two ways: they did not take into proper account the most ancient Indian commentators, and also tended to be blind followers of Western Sanskritists. The major part of

the book was devoted to a criticism of Max Müller's Vedic research. A lot of hard work had gone into this exposition: it included tables of meanings of Vedic words with references and detailed comparisons of Max Müller's and Dayananda's interpretation of particular *mantras*. The book ended with a translation of and commentary on the famous *Purusha Sūkta*, translated from Dayananda's *Vedabhāṣya*. The work was heavily based on Dayananda's, and was the result of Munshiram's regular study of the Swami's commentaries from 1886 onwards. But this study had to make way for many other more urgent tasks, and he published no more works of this type.

His next book, *Purāṇon kī nāpak talīm se bacho*, 'Save yourself from the impure teachings of the *Purāṇas*', deals with the same issue of the true sources of Hinduism by attacking those who were trying to revitalize the study of the *Purāṇas*.⁸² Of these propagandists Munshiram recognized two types. Firstly there were the orthodox pandits who tried to show that the *Purāṇas* were an addition to and a completion of Vedic revelation. The others, mainly Theosophists, tried to revive puranic lore by suggesting that a 'metaphorical' interpretation of the texts, especially of the more objectionable ones, yielded the highest truths.

Munshiram's method was to tackle a particular *Purāṇa*, in this case the *Bhaviṣya*. He started with the historical proof for its very recent composition: far from being the work of the ancient *rishi* Vyasa, it was written in the middle of the seventeenth century. Then he considered the content, using ample quotations. His method was very similar to that of Swami Dayananda: the text was discredited by showing that it contained a lot of material that offended reason and morality. The immorality of *guru*-worship, and of sexual advice and descriptions, was amply illustrated, as was the rational impossibility of the mythological and cosmological teachings. Mrs Annie Besant, the Theosophist leader, came in for biting criticism:

We first of all ask Mrs Annie Besant if she has fully examined the *Purāṇas*. We are certain she would not have read those vile stories. Otherwise she would not go around praising to high heaven the study of the *Purāṇas* . . . Please, read them carefully. Will you be able to give a metaphorical interpretation to the unholy stories of the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa* described above? Lady! Think a little. The women of this land are not as learned as you are, they cannot turn things into metaphors . . . will they on hearing those stories manage to keep their holiness intact? . . . Know for sure that [on

account of your pronouncements] the murder of hundreds and thousands of souls is happening.⁸³

Munshiram argued that even in contemporary India these works still exercised their pernicious influence: proof of this were the thousands of *devadāsīs* in Bombay and Madras, the temple-prostitutes of Bengal and Bihar, the unspeakable custom of wife-offering practised on pilgrimages and at festivals.

Munshiram edited and published two other works which were not original. In 1898 he brought out an Urdu translation of the lectures delivered by Swami Dayananda at Poona, gathered under the title of *Upadesh Manjarī*⁸⁴. This must have been a translation of the Hindi version that had been first published in Ajmer in 1893. In 1900 he published the *Ārya Saṅgītamālā*.⁸⁵ This was a handbook for Aryas containing hymns to be sung at the liturgy and at gatherings of the Arya Samaj. They were mostly Urdu hymns, followed by a selection of Vedic *mantras* accompanied by a Hindi translation.⁸⁶

Politics

For many years Munshiram, totally preoccupied with Samaj affairs, had paid little or no attention to national politics, which then meant the activities of the Indian National Congress. In fact up to 1900 such was the case with most Aryas in the Panjab, and the few who started to become interested tended to belong to the College party.⁸⁷ When in 1899 Munshiram was touring the United Provinces for the Gurukul fund, he decided to attend the Lucknow session of Congress 'for sending the message of the Gurukul to the different provinces of India'.⁸⁸ Like so many others he was simply handed a certificate of delegacy without even asking for it. He noted with disgust how hundreds of local Muslims had been enticed to participate in order to produce a show of Hindu-Muslim unity and to frustrate Syed Ahmed Khan's attempts to keep the Muslims away.

The highlight of the session was the arrival of Tilak, who had just been released from jail. He was lustily cheered at the mass meeting, but, to the great relief of those Munshiram labelled the moderate 'oligarch leaders', the Lokamanya did not address the crowd. Munshiram managed to have a short meeting with the hero of the day. He was attracted by his Vedic scholarship, and they

talked about caste in the *Vedas*. But he was obviously also influenced by Tilak's political views, which had an impact on his own attitude to the Congress, which in his words, 'was still a drawing room affair'.⁸⁹

This attitude was made abundantly clear in a series of articles he wrote in the *Sadharmpracharak* in 1900-1901.⁹⁰ At that time the Congress issue was assuming great importance in the Panjab because Lahore was to be the host city for the session at the end of 1900. Munshiram deplored the fact that Congress was 'more fond of show than of work', 'a mere farce', a sleeping body 'that begins to rub its eyes on the 1st every December, is wide awake on the 13th and goes to sleep again for another year a week later'. Its claim to represent the nation was nothing but a sham, as there were 'not even a dozen Congresswalas willing to sacrifice their comfort in order to learn the want of the masses and acquaint the people with their rights and privileges'. The Congress had no sincere and devoted workers 'who will devote at least half of their time to the furtherance of its objects'. What it needed was 'at least a hundred Congressmen full-time working in the service of the masses'.

The Congress method of boosting the number of Muslim delegates was severely criticized: 'every year a number of Musalman vagabonds are got hold of and made to stump on the Congress platform'. On the current intense discussion among Muslims about their participation in or rejection of Congress he commented as follows:

If the Mussalmans have decided to resort to political agitation they should join the National Congress. In case they find that their voice is disregarded and that their joining the Congress is likely to prove harmful to their interests, they can at once sever their connection with that body for ever.

He ridiculed the great attempts of Congress to raise the paltry sum of fifty thousand rupees to keep the British Congress Committee afloat, when 'the pocket expenses alone of the well-to-do natives who attend the annual meetings . . . must exceed five hundred thousand rupees a year'.

Munshiram was so disgusted with the Congress that he did not even bother to attend its Lahore session. However, he went down to participate in the meetings of the Social Conference. A month earlier he had challenged the participants for having 'not done so far what an ordinary Arya Samaj can achieve in one year', and

invited them to come and share a meal with the converted Rahtias. But he was in for another disappointment:

The Social Conference is an entirely useless body, and so far as practical work is concerned has accomplished absolutely nothing up to now. Indeed, its promoters are such timid and slow moving persons that they seem to be afraid of shadows, and are consequently utterly unfit to discharge their self-imposed duties . . . certain members of the Reception Committee of the last Conference had assured him that the leaders of the movement would be invited to a dinner when the Rahtia converts to the Aryan religion were also to take part. Nothing of the kind was, however, done, nay, the Rahtias were not even named in the resolution relating to the necessity for improving the condition of the lower classes of Native Society.⁹¹

Thus the first period of Munshiram's public life came to an end. He was forty-five, at the height of his powers, having developed his skills as a propagandist of word and pen, and his organizational aptitudes. His dedication to the work of *dharma* had become a consuming passion. He had assumed leadership of the Mahatmas, and created a new centre of power in the Pratinidhi Sabha. He had steered his party along new paths, taking the initiative in the *prachār*, female education, and *shuddhi* movements. The common people looked upon him with admiration and reverence, and accorded him the title of Mahatma. But dissension, jealousy, bitterness, factionalism, and suspicion kept working like poison within the Samaj, and eroded his leadership in the corridors of Arya Samaj power because he was temperamentally not suited to be an arbiter and a tactician of compromise. As his Samaj work had increased, his professional career had shrunk into insignificance. And then he lost the two closest friends of those years, Lekhrām and Devraj. The Arya Samaj had become the *raison d'être* of his life, yet both on the leadership and the personal level he found himself increasingly isolated.

His family life too had suffered considerably. The break with Devraj had separated the two closely-knit families. Indra remembered how hard it was for the children not to be able to visit their favourite aunt any more.⁹² When he arranged the intercaste marriage of Garudatta and Sumitra at his home, there was, as Indra wrote, 'violent opposition within our family', especially from the devoted aunt who had looked after the children all these years. The attitude of this aunt and of other members of the family 'dealt a savage blow to the heart of my father', Indra wrote.⁹³

When Munshiram took up the begging bowl for the Gurukul,

he became for eight months a man without a home. When he returned, his sons had gone to boarding school. His law practice was non-existent: he had sent his munshi on leave during his absence.⁹⁴ The house seemed empty, Jullundur desolate. It is no wonder that Munshiram, looking at the broken pieces around him, decided that the time was ripe for a radical change. He gave away his extensive wardrobe, the last symbols of a lawyer's position and prestige, and henceforth wore only Indian garments.⁹⁵ The impossible dream of the Gurukul now became his sole obsession. He was glad to start again from the beginning, having shed the last attachments to mundane success, to go to the Hardwar jungle and to enter the third *āshrama* of the *vānaprastha*, the forest-dweller without a home.

CHAPTER IV

Gurukul Kangri: a dream come true, 1902-1917

'Here in the Gurukul was the new India.'¹

On 2 March 1901 the holy pilgrimage centre of Hardwar witnessed a most extraordinary event: the arrival of the staff and pupils of the Gurukul. Indra never forgot that spectacle:

As we left the station at Hardwar we formed a procession. At the head were Mahatmajī and Pandit Gangadatta, and behind them marched Totaram carrying a large picture of Maharshi Dayananda. We followed in rows of two. As we emerged out of the station we intoned Vedic *mantras* in a loud voice, and kept chanting until we were past Kankhal bazaar. Hardwar and Kankhal were towns mainly of *pandas* and pilgrims . . . with wonder they gazed at the oak flags and listened to our chant. Bemused, they stared at us as if we were creatures from another world.²

On arrival at their destination they had their first sight of what would be their home. two *bighas* of open space in the midst of thick jungle, two rows of thatched huts, a small cabin, and a cattle shed. That was the beginning of the Gurukul.³

Fifteen years later, on 12 April 1917, Mahatma Munshiram donned the robes of the *sannyāsī* and said farewell to the institution he had founded. Then there was a large complex of brick buildings, housing a school with 276 pupils, a University section with sixty-four students, and a staff of thirty-five teachers. There were ample classrooms, dormitories, a library, science laboratories, a hospital, workshops, an agricultural institute, a guesthouse, etc. Moreover, Gurukul branches had been established in four different locations across North India.⁴ It was a magnificent achievement, which had taken fifteen years of Munshiram's life, from the age of forty-five to sixty. Yet during this period his activities had not remained limited to the building and management of his Gurukul. He laid the foundations of his future leadership on a wider scale both in the management of the Arya Samaj and in the realm of politics.

The Gurukul

The first five years spent by Munshiram in the Gurukul with his small band of teachers and pupils, which included his two sons Harichandra and Indra, were probably the happiest of his life. It was a constant hard battle to tame the jungle, but the intimate closeness of all in this endeavour knit them together as a family. All took part in everything, the physical toil, the walks and climbs in the forest, the swims in the Ganga; and they created a completely new world of their own. Indra recalled that in these five years the pupils did not once cross the river into the village of Kankhal.⁵ Nostalgically he reminisced on how life 'abounded in sweetness', and how 'these were the most contented years of my childhood'. Temporary buildings arose: classrooms, dormitories, a library, a dining hall, a hospital, a prayer-room, an office, and teachers' quarters. The number of pupils increased threefold from its original fifty-three.⁶ This was adequate proof that more and more Aryas were accepting the Gurukul as an alternative form of schooling, and disproved the pessimistic forecasts of its antagonists.

During this period the institution was run very informally in an essentially traditional way. Indra recalled there were 'only a few trickles of innovation', like the controversial introduction of kerosene lamps. But in the year 1906 'that trickle became a flood'.⁷ The cause of this upheaval was the arrival of three new teachers. Dr Bharadvaj, the founder of the radical Shriomani Sabha, was freshly back from England, and came to devote his life to the Gurukul. The other two were also graduates, Master Govardhan, B.A., a science teacher, and Master Ramdeva, B.A., a teacher of English. They had two important things in common. First, they were graduates in western subjects. Secondly, they were all enthusiasts. Bharadvaj was a radical from way back; Ramdeva was by nature 'an extreme enthusiast', former secretary of the Arya Bhratri Sabha, and Govardhan was, in Indra's phrase, 'a rule-book incarnate'.

A clash with the masters of the old school who had so far dominated the Gurukul was inevitable. Very soon the basic issues came to the fore: increase in the teaching of western science, increase in the teaching of English, starting not in the ninth but in the sixth class; the transformation of an informal family institution into a

'properly run' school with bells, timetables, desks, etc.⁸ Pandit Gangadatta, the leading representative of the old school, a specialist in Sanskrit, radically disagreed with the innovators on all points. Other issues arose that increased the clash of opinions: the use of quinine for Indra's extremely severe bout of malarial fever, and the attempts of the other new arrival, Dr Sukhdeo, to give instruction to the sweepers.

Munshiram as head of the institution was caught in the middle, and had to make the hard decisions. When he supported the innovators, Pandit Gangadatta felt defeated, and resigned from the Gurukul, taking with him some teachers and pupils. Shortly afterwards they joined together in founding a rival Gurukul in close proximity, the Gurukul Mahavidyalay, Jwalapur.⁹ It was a sorrowful parting for Munshiram, when he lost the one who had been his closest and dearest collaborator in the pioneering years. Later on, in 1908, he had the opportunity of healing the wounds. When Gangadatta became very ill, Munshiram fetched him to his Gurukul so that he could receive proper medical treatment.¹⁰

From 1905 onwards the strong anti-Munshiram group among the Mahatma party became more vocal and bold. Its leaders were the then President of the Pratinidhi Sabha, Ray Thakurdatta Dhavan, and Lala Rallaram. They resented Munshiram's fame and influence, and sought to curtail them through various intrigues. When Mahashay Krishna, then editor of the organ of the Sabha, the *Arya Patrika*, tried to defend Munshiram, he was forced to resign. When he founded his Urdu weekly, the *Prakash*, to defend Munshiram, and Jaimini Mehta started his *Sikharak* for the same purpose, the opponents founded the *Hukari*, which launched a vicious campaign.¹¹ It was a slanderous personal attack on Munshiram, alleging that for many reasons he was not worthy of the title of Mahatma; he lived in the lap of luxury, embezzled funds entrusted to him, and so on. They became so bold as to try discrediting him as leader and deposing him from all responsible posts in the management of the Arya Samaj.

On 26 May 1905 the following motion was proposed by seven members at the Pratinidhi Sabha meeting:

That an enquiry committee be instituted to investigate the following

- 1 Lala Munshiram is not worthy to be trusted in the matter of money given for the sake of public works, because he has embezzled 14,000 rupees of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha.

2. Lala Munshiram is not worthy of being appointed holder of any post in a religious institution involving responsibility and trust, because he is accustomed to spread false accusations about people opposed to him and fabrications, so that there be no fame left of his opponents among the common people.¹²

The motion was soundly defeated by forty-four votes to seventeen, but it indicated the strength and daring of the opposition. Munshiram was shattered by the event; when he returned from Lahore his sons noticed how in a week's time his hair and beard had turned half-grey. His opponents kept up a barrage of virulent accusations in the press and in pamphlets.¹³ Munshiram had his loyal defenders and tended to ignore the affair in his own journal. But the time came when he could no longer stay silent. He suddenly retired for a fortnight to a bungalow near the Gurukul, and wrote in one go his apology, a book in Urdu of nearly six hundred pages, entitled *Dukhī Dil ki pirdard Dastān*, 'The sorrowful tale of a grieving heart'.¹⁴

This is a very pathetic document exposing at great length the quarrels and machinations, some very mean and petty, that had simmered and boiled between the Panjabi Aryas for some ten years. Munshiram systematically dealt with every accusation that had been levelled against him, refuting them with an endless series of letters, reports of meetings, and extracts from newspapers and journals. Many pages reproduce detailed accounts and protracted correspondence for disproving accusations of financial dishonesty; chapters are devoted to proving the fierce and unfair enmity he had suffered from individuals for years on end. Munshiram had many misgivings about writing and publishing the book. In the preface he quoted anonymous letters sent to him which tried to dissuade him from doing so 'for the good of the Arya Samaj which could only suffer through his exposures'. However, he strongly suspected that these letters came from his very enemies, who at the same time kept fiercely attacking him in their papers, by publishing a careful selection of documents damaging to him. Munshiram reluctantly decided that he had been left no other way of clearing his name than by publishing once and for all the complete set of documents available.

The opening of the College section of the Gurukul in 1907 led to another controversy among the Aryas, and battle-lines were drawn that would remain unchanged for many years. The fundamental

cause of dissent was the following. A large number of leading Panjabi Aryas, among whom were personal supporters of Munshiram in the slander campaign against him, felt that the Gurukul was taking a wrong direction, evolving towards a university 'producing not brahmins, but vaishyas'. In their opinion, the function of the Gurukul should be to prepare priests, preachers, and missionaries,¹⁵ but Munshiram steered the institution further and further away from that objective. They felt that the Pratinidhi Sabha's only goal was the propagation of truth, and that a university-type Gurukul was completely outside its purview. That was why this group saw to it that the Pratinidhi Sabha refused to give much time, or any money to the Gurukul. Among them Mahashay Krishna, the editor of *Prakash*, was prominent, whence arose the name Prakash party.

Munshiram continuously complained about this neglect, 'which can only come from ignorance'. 'They have time for everything else, but they treat the Gurukul like a useless appendage, not worthy of any serious consideration'.¹⁶ He proposed that the Pratinidhi Sabha institute a separate Managing Committee for the Gurukul, on which the Sabha, patrons, donors, and graduates would be represented. But this proposal was never seriously considered, and finally shelved. All his pleas met with a solid wall of resistance. He argued that Vedic study had remained the main object, that the other sciences were subsidiary to that study, and that the growing Gurukul was in fact no different from that envisaged in the original prospectus approved by the Sabha. This last argument had strength, because the study of both English and Science had been emphasized there.¹⁷ But no arguments or pleas moved the opposition. Even repeated letters of resignation failed to have any effect.¹⁸ Munshiram was forced to do all alone, and to keep finding the vital funds for the growing Gurukul, because the Pratinidhi Sabha, its parent now only in name, was not prepared to support it.

Munshiram kept the Gurukul growing steadily. New teachers with degrees were appointed to the college section, and in 1910 a college building went up consisting of twenty rooms, a library, and a science hall. From 1909 onwards the increase of pupils in the school section was slow and controlled, but the college section grew apace from three students in 1909 to sixty-four in 1917. Agricultural courses, both practical and theoretical, were started in 1910. In 1912 the first two graduates of the college section were awarded

their degrees: they were Harischandra and Indra.¹⁹ The school section was able to slow down its growth because new branches were opening elsewhere. In early 1909 the first was inaugurated in Multan, thanks to the generosity of *Rais* Chaudhuri Ramakrishna. Next came Kurukshetra in 1912, Indraprastha near Delhi in 1913, and Gurukul-Matmdu at Rohtak in 1915. These institutions were limited to the high-school section, and lightened the pressure of pupil demand on the school section of the parent Gurukul, providing at the same time candidates for its college courses.²⁰

As the Gurukul college and schools grew, the need for textbooks in the Hindi medium became acute, as very little was then available in that language. The Gurukul did pioneering work in catering to that need. Its teachers produced some of the first Hindi textbooks in the sciences: chemistry, geology, physics, and botany. Several books on politics, government, and economics were written especially for the students, as was a manual of psychology. Ramdeva wrote an extensive *History of India*, and Munshiram produced a number of tracts on the great religions of the world.²¹ These Hindi textbooks did not completely replace the English ones, because proficiency in English remained an important objective. This was encouraged by the inauguration in 1907 of the *Vedic Magazine*, which provided an outlet for the English writings of teachers and students. The propagation of Hindi was reinforced by an important innovation in 1907: the *Saddharmpracharak* which had appeared in Urdu for eighteen years, was published in Hindi from 1 March 1907.

Munshiram developed his ideas about Hindi in his presidential address to the fourth Hindi Sahitya Sammelan in Bhagalpur on 6 December 1913. He considered the rebirth of his mother-country impossible without 'the universal awakening of the mother-tongue'. This national language had to be Hindi: English could not take that position because scarcely one in five hundred Indians knew it. More importantly, 'a foreign language would mean a foreign culture, and therefore foreign rule', and it was bound to stifle original thought. In his opinion the two main methods of propagating Hindi were to make it the medium of instruction, and to start a daily newspaper in that language.²²

Munshiram, bereft of the financial support of the Pratinidhi Sabha, had to carry on his own shoulders the burden of providing

funds for the steady expansion. He made several personal sacrifices to the Gurukul; in 1902 he had donated his whole library, and in 1908 he made his press over to the institution. In 1912 he made his final sacrifice. Indra never forgot the day when he and his brother were summoned to the Principal. Their father explained to them that the only asset he still owned was the palatial house he had built in Jullundur. That was all he could ever leave them. He very much wanted to donate it to the Gurukul, but would not do it without their consent. Silently, choked with emotion, the two young men signed their patrimony away.²³ But these gifts were but drops in the ocean. The principal method of raising funds became the yearly anniversary celebrations. The figures speak for themselves: donations in the early years were about twenty thousand rupees, but in the peak year of 1908 they rose to over five hundred thousand.²⁴

Thanks to the organizational genius of Munshiram these anniversaries became important public events, massive festivals that drew up to fifty thousand people to the Gurukul. In his recollections, Indra recalled how this journey of thousands 'in a spirit of *bhakti*' had all the emotional qualities of a pilgrimage. He thought that four factors contributed to this. Firstly, the articles and lectures about the Gurukul created the feeling that it was nothing less than 'a little piece of heaven'. Secondly, the fact that it was located at Hardwar, one of the cardinal pilgrimage places of Hinduism, tended to associate the very word Gurukul with pilgrimage. Then there was the spot itself, exhibiting such an affinity and integration with nature in a majestic setting, that 'it brought into the mind of even the hardest atheists thoughts about the divine'. And a final reason for this attitude, according to Indra, was the towering personality of Mahatma Munshiram.²⁵

The festivities lasted for five days and included, besides the graduation ceremony, a number of cultural activities. There was the Sarasvati Sammelan in which learned pandits gave lectures on philosophical and theological topics; the Deva Vani Sammelan, conducted entirely in Sanskrit, in which the best pupils took a prominent part, the special Anniversary Lectures by visiting scholars and local professors; an educational exhibition, etc. It was a major fund-raising and propaganda enterprise that increasingly attracted the cream of the Arya Samaj. It was also a formidable achievement of practical organization: the Gurukul, without

outside help, looked after many thousands of guests for up to five days in the middle of the Hardwar jungle. Mahatma Gandhi told the Congress at Belgaum in 1926 that it should take a leaf out of Munshiram's book in providing cheaply for the accommodation and comfort of its delegates.²⁶

In those fifteen years Munshiram created against all odds an educational institution that was in many ways completely original. Here was a complex institution of learning from primary to university level, conducted in Hindi, staffed by Indians only, totally independent of any Government subsidy or interference. It brooked no outside meddling in its academic programme, formulating its own syllabi, writing its own textbooks, awarding its own degrees. It had created its own peculiar mixture of old and new, of traditional Indian lore and western science, and infused it with Arya ideology. But its innovations did not end there. Its very setting added to its uniqueness: far away from the urban centres of learning in the Hardwar jungle, it isolated its students from the hurly-burly of urban and family life. Moreover, it was not just an educational institution, it had become a place of pilgrimage centered on the imposing figure of Mahatma Munshiram.

From the beginning the Gurukul had inherent weaknesses. In the process of organizing itself, it borrowed from current 'western' models in the way it arranged its classes and syllabi, and created a university section, attempting, as Indra put it, 'to fill new bottles with old wine'.²⁷ Another weakness was its constitutional dependence on the outside body of the Panjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. This link introduced into the institution the endless controversies and quarrels of the very contentious Panjabi Aryas, leading to factions and to tussles for power from outside, but also within the Gurukul. It is a sorry inheritance the institution has never succeeded in shaking off.

Munshiram and the Arya Samaj

During these fifteen years while Munshiram laboured on the development of his beloved Gurukul, some important changes were occurring in the Arya Samaj. First of all, there was a tremendous expansion in numbers. In 1901 the Samaj had nearly a hundred thousand adherents, mostly belonging to the higher castes, with the greatest number by far in the U.P.²⁸ In the following decade

that number more than doubled, and by 1921 it had nearly doubled again to a total of 467,000; by then the Panjab membership had overtaken that of the U.P. From 1901 the caste-composition of the Samaj changed drastically with the massive intake of low-caste members through the *shuddhi* movements. The second important development was the growing suspicion of the British Government that the Samaj was a subversive organization, and the ensuing debate among the Aryas about the role of the Samaj in politics. These two facts were of decisive importance as the Samaj burst into the twentieth century.

By the end of the nineteenth century Munshiram had made the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha into an effective body, and had been in the forefront of the management of the Panjab Arya Samaj, but had seen his leadership dwindle in the later years because of the multiple internal wrangles. After founding the Gurukul, he became removed from the centres of Panjab Arya Samaj power, and primarily occupied with his new vocation. In 1906 some of his supporters managed to elect him again to the presidency of the Pratinidhi Sabha, but Munshiram declined to take up the post.²⁹ We have described the factionalism over the personality of Munshiram and over his management of the Gurukul that rent the Mahatma party. As a result, Munshiram withdrew from direct involvement in the management of Panjab Arya Samaj, after vain efforts to make the Pratinidhi Sabha take greater responsibility for the financial and educational management of the Gurukul. This frustration drove him repeatedly to sending letters of resignation.³⁰ But his personal stature among the Panjabi Aryas and his outstanding achievements prevented his enemies from attempting to remove him from the Gurukul, or from even accepting his resignation.

But as Munshiram withdrew from direct involvement in the management of the Panjab Samaj, he started to work again on the realization of a dream that had occupied his mind earlier: the establishment of a super-regional, national organization to give direction to the whole Arya Samaj from Calcutta to Lahore and Bombay. As early as 1897 he had successfully moved a resolution in the Pratinidhi Sabha that such a national, *Sarvadeshi*, Committee be set up to co-ordinate the work of the provincial bodies. This same resolution had been shortly afterwards passed by the Pratinidhi Sabhas of U.P. and Rajasthan.³¹ During his North Indian begging tour for the Gurukul, Munshiram had

advocated this idea wherever he went, and finally, in August 1901, a meeting of northern Aryas was held in Delhi on this topic. It was agreed that such a national organization be formed, and a sub-committee was appointed which included Munshiram, to look into details and to draft proposals. However, nothing concrete resulted from even this attempt.³²

In 1907 the idea emerged again. This was the time when Munshiram was under attack from his Panjabi opponents, and when political troubles sent waves of dissent and indecision throughout the Arya Samaj. Munshiram wrote in his *Saddharmprachāra* about the urgent necessity for unity among the Aryas, who were experiencing an explosion in their numbers: only a national body could create that solidarity, especially necessary now that the British Raj was 'persecuting' the Samaj.³³ Munshiram had an additional motive for advocating a 'Sārvadeshik': he hoped that such a national body would take the Gurukul on as its special responsibility. He called up the vision of Gurukul branches all over the country, and of an Arya university, 'so that once again people from all over the world would start to come to this holy land of India to learn wisdom and a better way of life'.³⁴ The *Arya Patrika* also supported the necessity for a Sārvadeshik Sabha, and suggested that perhaps the Paropkarini Sabha could be transformed into such a body.³⁵

At the Gurukul anniversary celebrations of 1908 there was again a meeting of representatives on that topic, and a formal meeting was held six months later at Agra. This included official representatives of the provincial bodies, plus Munshiram. The fact that he was the only member not officially representing a provincial Sabha shows that the leading Aryas of the whole country accepted that he had to play a leading role. At this gathering the formal decision was taken to inaugurate a Sārvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, a permanent body of national Arya Samaj representatives. A draft constitution was accepted and a sub-committee was formed to print and distribute the statute to all provincial bodies. It was also decided that the first meeting of the Sārvadeshik should be called in Delhi. Accordingly, on 31 August 1909, that first formal meeting took place. Twenty-seven representatives were elected as members of the organization: seven each from the Panjab and the U.P., four each from Rajasthan and Bengal-Bihar, three from Madhya Pradesh, and two from Bombay. The first President was Pandit

Vanshīdar Sharma, but a year later Munshiram was elected to that office, which he held for seven consecutive years until 1917.³⁶

Thus, at last Munshiram's dream had become reality. However, complete unity had not been achieved. The College section of the Panjab Arya Samaj had been invited to send representatives from its own provincial body, the Pradeshik Arya Pratimādhī Sabha, to the Delhi meeting. They duly arrived, but when the rival Panjabi group threatened to withdraw, they themselves took that step: the wounds were far from healed. Another problem was the position of the Paropkarnī Sabha. An amalgamation had been suggested by some; in 1907 Munshiram declared himself against such a move, 'with the kind of people on that body, who will stay on it for another thirty years, one cannot hope for any success for twenty-five to thirty years'. Nevertheless, he was prepared to see what could be done, and when he was urged in 1908 to join the Paropkarnī Sabha, he reluctantly agreed. After two years of utter frustration, he resigned in disgust from a body 'rent by dissension and steeped in apathy'.³⁷ One happy result of this short association was that Munshiram collected and published a volume of letters written to Swami Dayananda.

As Munshiram moved away from his narrow base in the Panjab to play a leading role in national Arya Samaj management, he also receded from the radical position he had held as the leader of the Mahatma party. Although in his personal and family life he always implemented radical principles, we have seen that he had not become personally involved in the antics in the attempts at organizing radicalism among the more impatient members of the Mahatma party, and that he even occasionally became the butt of their criticism.³⁸ The new pressing need for unity among the Aryas battered by accusations of political intrigue made him revise some of his earlier attitudes. He wrote in his *Saddharmprachārak*:

I was decidedly of the opinion that for entry into the Arya Samaj it was necessary for a person to sign the fifty-one *siddhāntas* (statements of doctrine and rules of conduct) of *Rishi* Dayananda. Now however, after full deliberation and not finding in the fundamental *ānyāmas* (the ten rules) any support for this, I have changed my mind on this matter.³⁹

In other words, he now accepted that an Arya need not specifically subscribe to the full theological system of Dayananda in order to be a worthy member of the Samaj, because the Swami himself had never demanded it.

The same mellowing of earlier radicalism is evident in the pamphlet *Veda aur Arya Samāj*, published in 1916.⁴⁰ After establishing that in Dayananda's own view, 'the *Vedas* are the primary foundation of the Arya Samaj, all other rules are secondary, and are only for the sake of the protection and propagation of the *Vedas*', Munshiram asked the question, 'What then is the place of Dayananda in the Arya Samaj?'⁴¹ The bulk of the pamphlet attempts to answer that question. According to the author, Dayananda was and still remained the great *āchārya*, the expounder of the *Vedas* for modern times. The teaching of the *āchārya* is authoritative not because he has pressed the stamp of his intellect on good people and thus subdued them, but because he has pointed towards Vedic knowledge, and exemplified it in his life, just like the ancient *āchāryas* did.⁴² Dayananda himself had declared that the books of these sages were binding only in as far as they were in conformity with the *Vedas*: he wanted his own teachings and his own writings such as the *Satyārth Prakāśh* to be treated in the same way.⁴³ He acknowledged his own fallibility, and he wanted his Aryas to reject whatever in his own writings did not pass that supreme test of conformity with the *Vedas*.⁴⁴

In fact, Munshiram held that Dayananda's word was not the final one, and that in the future some learned Arya, standing as it were on the Swami's shoulders, may see even further and more clearly. He was right in stating that Dayananda abhorred nothing more than *guru*-worship:

Weakhearted people without faith fear that if some Vedic *mantras* were more profoundly interpreted by someone else, then Dayananda's greatness would be impaired, and that a sect would be destroyed without its *guru*. But they forget that Dayananda was born precisely for the purpose of putting an end to all forms of sectarianism: he did not make his Arya Samaj into a sect.⁴⁵

Munshiram saw the Swami as part of an evolving history of Vedic illumination: 'From time to time *āchāryas* appear for the protection of the *Vedas*, God's own sacred word, and they liberate religion from the narrow confines of sectarianism. Arya Samajes will continue to be established, from era to era, from century to century'⁴⁶ On the last page of his pamphlet Munshiram boldly stated his ideas in a way that must have been objectionable to quite a number of radicals of the Mahatma faction. 'For the fulfilment of *āchārya* Dayananda's own mission, it is necessary to forget even

the personality of the *Āchārya* himself, so that not the slightest shadow may fall over the light of the sun of the *Veda*.⁴⁷

That same non-sectarian view of Dayananda is also evident in two other works Munshiram wrote in this period. The first was a collection of letters written to the Swami, entitled *Rushi Dayānand kā Patrevyavahār*.⁴⁸ In December 1907 the Paropkarini Sabha entrusted to Munshiram the task of writing a biography of the Swami and a history of the Arya Samaj. Among the materials Munshiram collected were a number of letters written to the Swami. He reproduced some in his *Saddharmprachārak*, but then decided to bring them all out together in book form, thus preserving precious historical materials for posterity. In his introduction to the collection, Munshiram professed that as a compiler of historical documents it was 'his duty not to change anything in any document', and he pleaded with his readers to submit all materials they might possess about the Swami, because . . . 'no Arya has the right to suppress even a word . . . even if some light were thrown on some weakness of the Swami'.⁴⁹

The other work, *Ādim Satyārth Prakāsh aur Ārya Samāj ke Siddhānt*, 'The original *Satyārth Prakāsh* and the principles of the Arya Samaj', was written in answer to agitation that arose when a Pandit Kaluram declared his intention of republishing the first edition of Dayananda's *Satyārth Prakāsh*.⁵⁰ The Paropkarini Sabha and some Arya leaders wanted to resort to the law to prevent that happening, for many Aryas had long been worried by the significant differences between the first edition of that work in 1875, and the second one that was finished by the Swami just before his death in 1883. What disturbed them most was that the discrepancies were not limited to doctrinal matters, but also included some practical directives on very sensitive issues such as the consumption of meat and the performance of *Shrāddh* for the deceased.⁵¹ As they found it unacceptable to admit any change in the Swami's ideas on these important issues, they argued that unscrupulous scribes had interpolated some of their own ideas into the earlier edition. This argument certainly had some validity, but did not explain everything. Some Aryas attempted to erase the cause of their worry in a different way by attempting to make the first edition unavailable.

Munshiram's attitude was much more rational and level-headed. He argued that the book, with all its imperfections, was one of the

most important works written in the nineteenth century, containing a profusion of the best ideas of the Swami. He did not understand why anyone would want to prevent its republication. 'If we are able to ignore in our reading even of the *Upanishads* the fact that (parts of them) are against the *Vedas*, what kind of attitude is this to be afraid of the republication of the first *Satyārth Prakāsh*?'⁵² Although he agreed, and showed, that Dayananda's text had been corrupted by scribes, he was not averse to accepting that the Swami might well have changed his mind in some matters. Moreover, he drew attention to the principle, enunciated by Dayananda himself, that in judging any doctrine we should not ask ourselves 'Was that what the Swami taught?', but rather 'Is it in accordance with the *Vedas*?'⁵³

The Arya Samaj and politics

In the opening years of the twentieth century political agitation was intensifying in the Panjab, and the Aryas, mainly from the College section, were significantly in the forefront.⁵⁴ Munshiram, physically isolated and completely absorbed in his Gurukul work, restricted his interest to that of a critical observer. In his *Sād-dharmprachāra* he regularly commented upon political events, but with the superiority of one uninvolved, with the clear moral incisiveness of one twice removed from the murky ambiguities and uncertainties of the actual power play itself.

The coronation of Edward VII, the Delhi Durbar of 1903, and the Indian visit of the Prince of Wales were all occasions when the princes of the Indian Native States magnificently and extravagantly paraded their loyalty to the Empire. On reading the report of Hindu rajas laying wreaths on the tomb of her late Majesty 'to flatter the powers that be', Munshiram drew the 'conclusion that centuries must elapse before India can hope to have independent rule'.⁵⁵ He berated the princes for 'posing as the representatives of the millions of their country', when they have 'no right to do anything in the name of the people of India'.⁵⁶ He felt that the spectacle of the 'clumsy, fat, and useless native chiefs' at the Delhi Durbar was 'a true picture of the helpless and fallen condition of India'.⁵⁷ When the coming visit of the Prince of Wales was announced Munshiram anticipated that after having exhausted themselves financially for the London coronation and the Delhi Durbar,

the princes could 'be depended upon to prove their loyalty by entertaining the prince with borrowed money'.⁵⁸

Munshiram still did not think much of the members of the Congress, whom he considered as unworthy as the princes of representing the Indian people, they should first put their own houses in order instead of criticizing the powers that be.⁵⁹ But in his eyes the revolutionaries and their secret societies 'given to work in the dark' were much worse. In July 1905 he ridiculed Shyamji Krishna Varma for establishing an Indian Home Rule Society in London, and he asked where the Indians could be found who would gladly suffer imprisonment for the sake of their country. His final remark on self-rule was: 'There can be no doubt that the time will come, be it two or three centuries hence, when the British will have to leave India.'⁶⁰

During the period from 1901 to the middle of 1905 there is a striking absence in Munshiram's political comments of harsh criticism of the British Government. In fact, in his judgement the British were 'better endowed with the cardinal virtues than the people of India', and the only ones who could lay a claim to the title of Arya - no wonder they ruled the world.⁶¹ But he gave some advice to the British too: the Indians were no longer children, and 'the best interests of Government demanded that it now should treat the people of India as friends'. This comment arose from Munshiram's disturbance over the attempts of the Anglo-Indian newspapers to create an atmosphere of suspicion in Government circles, urging the British to pursue a policy of distrust.⁶²

The truth was that at this time some government officials were becoming rather nervous about the Arya Samaj. This is evident from official papers of April 1904 gathered to answer the question 'Whether membership of the Arya Samaj is to be considered as a bar to the conferment of a title on the person concerned'. This file shows how differently various officials then viewed the Arya Samaj. L. Dane and H. H. Risley made it quite clear that they did not see anything politically sinister in the Samaj, but considered it a very useful organization devoted to political and social reform. Others did not agree. They regarded it 'as, at any rate potentially, a most dangerous political organization', and held that 'the fact that a man is a leading Arya is a presumption against his loyalty'. British officials were starting to seriously question the loyalty of the



Lala Napakchand, Munshiram's father, in police officer's uniform



Family group. From left to right: Manish ram, Vedavati (daughter, Indra younger son) seated, Harishchandra (elder son)



Google Mahatma Munshi Ram



a Gurukul Kangri - the first hut (Mahatma Munshiram with stores in-charge)



b Gurukul Kangri - as it has further developed



Mahatma Munshiram
two portraits





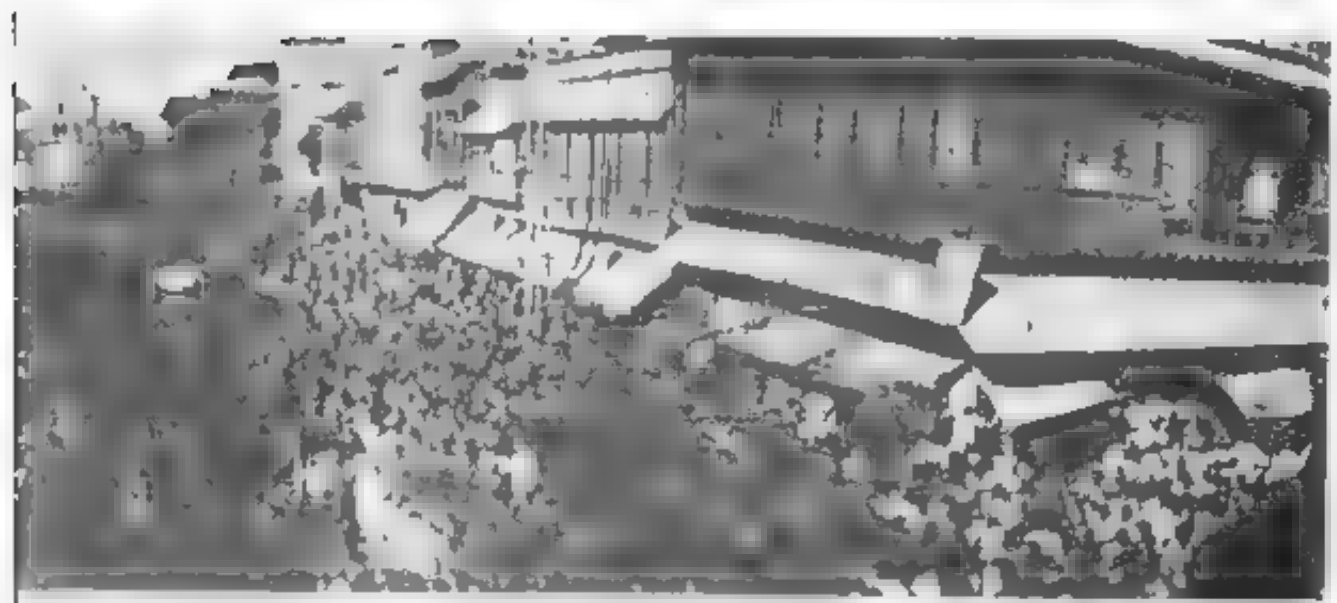
Swami Shradhdhananda's assumption of *sannyas*



Swami Shradhdhananda foreground with members of the Punjab Arya Pratimudhi Sabha



Swami Shradhananda on his deathbed



Swami Shradhananda's funeral procession

Aryas, but at this stage Munshiram does not seem to have been aware of this.⁶³

The partition of Bengal in 1905 and its traumatic repercussions on the Indian political scene had an immediate effect on Munshiram too. He came down from his remote judgement seat and became passionately preoccupied with the issues involved. He did not pull punches in his condemnation of the government of Bengal, who had 'by their oppression . . . plunged not only Bengal but entire India into mourning'.⁶⁴ Fuller had 'introduced a Reign of Terror into the new Province', and if he had any self-respect he should resign.⁶⁵ The criticism of the Bengal government widened into a bitter indictment of British rule appearing in the *Saddharm-pracharak*: the Government of India was not living up to Queen Victoria's promises of justice for the natives, who now looked in vain for justice from the Government.⁶⁶ It had gone so far that now 'it had no right to expect the people to render it any help in the administration of the country'.⁶⁷ Instead of a parade of elephants before the Prince of Wales, there should be a procession 'comprising the scores of starving, naked and homeless natives, whom famines have driven out of their birthplaces and compelled to live by begging'.⁶⁸ Even if the Prince of Wales was sympathetic to the children of the soil, 'the efforts of the Prince in the cause of this unfortunate country will prove unavailing, seeing that even the King-Emperor can do no more than utter words that are put in his mouth by the party in power'.⁶⁹ Notwithstanding this harsh criticism, Munshiram still believed that British rule could be good rule:

It is the duty of the King-Emperor and the Parliament to keep the government of this country in their own hands in the true sense of the term, so as to strengthen the foundation of British rule in India and deserve blessings from the voiceless Indian people.⁷⁰

The swadeshi programme elicited for the first time in a long period Munshiram's praise for Congress. 'Swadeshi could not only benefit the country but also enable the people to take revenge for the oppression'. But if Congress really wanted to become effective, it should go out to the masses.⁷¹ Commenting on Dadabhai Naoroji's speech at the 1906 session of the National Congress, which he called 'a commonplace performance', Munshiram felt that it was notable only for the one reason that the speaker had

expressed the opinion that Congress had to acquaint illiterate villagers with their political rights. He continued:

Phrases like 'self-government for Indians' are wholly meaningless until at least the leaders of the Congress Movement have been to every village and acquainted its residents with their political rights. The task is such that one should not hesitate even to lose one's life in the attempt to accomplish it.⁷²

In his book *The Arya Samaj and Politics, a Vindication*, published in 1910,⁷³ Munshiram was keen to prove that even before the deportation of Lajpat Rai he used to condemn 'all kinds of political agitations'.⁷⁴ To this purpose he cited some extracts from articles he wrote in his paper in 1906. But on closer inspection it becomes clear that the criticism of Congress contained in these passages was of a special type: that Congress leaders needed to be men of pure and strong character, men of worship, living according to the great ancient Vedic ideals. It is not really criticism of political methods used by Congress. Such is singularly lacking in the years before 1907, although his condemnation of secret revolutionary societies went far back.

The arrest and deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai fell like a bombshell among the Aryas. The Panjab had been in ferment, and political agitators had succeeded in bringing about a working union of urban and rural discontent. The British were frightened and interpreted the agitation as a plot to overthrow the Government. Their reaction was to split the movement. In the countryside they pursued a policy of reconciliation by concessions, in the cities one of repression.⁷⁵ As the Aryas were very prominent among the urban leaders, the Arya Samaj found itself the main target of distrust and repression. The College party was the first to react in self-defence. Lala Hansraj led a delegation to Lieutenant-Governor Ibbetson, trying to convince him that the Arya Samaj was 'an organization which had for its sole object the religious and educational advancement of its members'. Ibbetson was sceptical, and asked that the Samaj dissociate itself publicly from what had happened. The following day the Arya Pradeshik Sabha of the College party issued a declaration denying any connection with any political body or with political agitation in any shape.⁷⁶

Munshiram immediately took up the defence of the Arya Samaj, acting not in the name of a faction, but as one concerned with the whole Samaj. From his first letter published in the *Punjabee*

of 12 June 1907 to the publication of the large volume, *The Arya Samaj and Politics, a Vindication*, at the end of 1910, he produced a constant stream of speeches and articles on the same theme. He obviously felt that on behalf of the Arya Samaj he had to play a major role in the reconciliation with the Government. In some ways he was in an excellent position to do just that. His stature among the Aryas was assured notwithstanding all the wrangles, and he had become less and less identified with factions. At the same time he had not been personally involved in the political agitations that had made the Government look upon the Samaj as a hotbed of sedition. All his pronouncements and writings on this topic produced over the span of three years revolved around some basic themes that remained substantially unchanged.

The first theme was that the Arya Samaj was a purely religious body, not a political one, and that it had no connections with any political grouping. Since the antagonists kept asserting that the Samaj had inherited its political doctrines from the writings of Dayananda, his defence included a vindication of the Swami's ideas. He elaborated with considerable force the argument that Dayananda's writings had no reference to politics, especially in his letters to the *Civil and Military Gazette* of June 1907, displaying a thorough knowledge of the founder's writings and of their meaning and intent.⁷⁷

Throughout this period Munshiram used the strongest language in expressing his disapproval of any form of terrorism: bomb anarchists betrayed their own, being demented youths steeped in sin; terrorist publications like *Yugantar* should be burned because they constituted an extreme danger to young men, if any Arya preached political assassination and murder, he was no Arya and deserved to be tortured to death, terrorists had not learned their methods from the Aryan civilization, but rather from British terrorists.⁷⁸ His criticisms, however, were also directed at the more extremist faction of Congress, which he regarded as being too close to the terrorists: 'No person can sympathize with the Extremist Party which follows principles subversive of religion and morality'. The Surat split was caused by them according to Munshiram, and they were absolutely unfit to govern. They were especially criticized for the nefarious way in which they sought to influence and use young students.⁷⁹ Thus Munshiram made it

abundantly clear that he had no sympathy whatsoever with any political group or action which the Government may have considered seditious.

But at the same time Munshiram saw it as his special task to find out and publicize the way Government and Army officers were unjustly harassing the Aryas. He kept speaking and writing about these persecutions, giving detailed lists of such incidents.⁸⁰ He used harsh words about the 'deceit, hypocrisy, and underhandedness' of officials, and argued that they were destroying their own prestige and lowering the British Government in the estimation of the people.⁸¹ His book *Vindication* included such lists, and even a special appendix about the continuous harassment of Aryas. If Munshiram was outspoken in his condemnation of terrorism, he did not mince words in his vehement indictment of Government officials. This is quite clearly demonstrated by the comments of the Legal Remembrancer in the government file about Munshiram's book *Vindication*.

The impression conveyed is that the Government has treated the Arya Samaj with studied unfairness in defiance of the policy of the Queen's proclamation. Such remarks are calculated to excite disaffection towards the British administration in India. It is attempted to support this insinuation by instances of unjust treatment dealt out to Arya Samajists solely on the ground of their convictions, and even if these accounts are not garbled, as they appear to be, their publication can only produce ill-feeling . . . I think there is justification for taking action against the book under section 12 of the Press Act.⁸²

While he was slating the actions and attitudes of Government officials, Munshiram realized how important it was for the Samaj to clear its name with the Government itself at the highest possible level. The College section had acted first in this direction by its delegation to Ibbetson and its subsequent resolution in the Pradeshik Sabha. However, that attempt had been futile. Munshiram felt that the Arya Samaj should go even higher up. On 23 August 1907 he suggested that Lord Minto should send for some of the leaders of the Samaj and talk freely with them, 'so that His Excellency may come to know who are the real enemies of the Government and how the Government can protect itself against them'⁸³ On 30 August he proposed that his suggestion should be incorporated in a resolution of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha and be communicated to the Viceroy.⁸⁴

However, Munshiram was very well aware of the danger involved in sending a deputation, and cited some reasons for this in his *Sadharnpracharak* of 28 October 1908:

We have been given to understand that his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor (Sir John Hewitt) has appointed a high European police officer to go about interviewing Arya Samajists of light and learning and to ascertain their view on the questions of the day. We have also come to know that His Honour is about to invite a deputation of the Arya Samajists, which, it is given out, he will introduce to His Excellency the Viceroy also. Now, before any such step is taken, we would beg to point out the futility of such a deputation. The memory is still fresh in our mind of the scant courtesy with which the Panjab deputation was treated by the then Lieutenant-Governor of that province. In order to be of any use the proposed deputation should not, therefore, be invited until efforts have been made to secure good-will on either side. With this purpose in view we suggest that the Government should draw out a list of the grounds on which the Arya Samajists have been treated as suspects, and the Arya Samajists on their part should submit in detail an account of the ill-treatment they have been subject to, because of their being so suspected. A clear exposition of these facts would explain all misunderstandings, and would pave the way for future good-will and co-operation. The deputation, if it is invited after all this is done, would surely be a boon both to the rulers and the ruled.⁶⁵

In other words, Munshiram insisted that the Aryas should not go as beggars, should put their own case forcefully, and that the invitation to a meeting should be initiated by the Government. He kept hammering the point that the highest authority should inform itself properly, and not listen to 'police reports and Mahomedans'.⁶⁶ He wrote that Sir John Hewitt should come to Arya Samaj functions and see things for himself, and that high officials should visit the Gurukul.⁶⁷ He put it all in a nutshell thus: 'I am opposed to the idea of waiting in deputation uninvited and to get a castigation. Only when the Government is resolved to be fair to the Arya Samaj, orders an extensive inquiry, and invites the leaders to conference will our deputation wait upon the rulers of the land.'⁶⁸ He went to visit Sir John Hewitt, 'who has no suspicions about the Gurukula, but suspects still some individuals here and there', but he insisted that he only went for the interview because he was invited.⁶⁹ Munshiram did not want the Samaj to go begging in sackcloth and ashes,⁷⁰ but to proceed from a position of strength. He compared the standing of the Arya Samaj to that of the *sanyasi*, who has nothing to do with politics, memorials, or repre-

sentations: 'That is not our duty. Loyalty with us is not merely an article for show. It constitutes the first condition of our existence in this country.'⁹¹

This conviction did not prevent Munshiram from calling on the highest authorities to intervene when he thought that necessary. He asked Sir John Hewitt to issue a proclamation declaring 'that no person shall be declared disloyal simply because he is an Arya Samajist'.⁹² He appealed to Lord Minto not to give credence to malicious informants.⁹³ He sent Madan Mohan Seth's pamphlet 'An open letter to Lord Morley' to the Viceroy accompanied by an introduction by himself.⁹⁴

This firm attitude on the part of Munshiram towards the authorities, both in denouncing persecution by minor officials and in requesting a fair hearing from the highest officials, was accompanied by an equally firm stand for the protection of the Samaj. Munshiram stood out among the Arya leaders for his passionate defence of his Samaj. Many Aryas were fearful, a number even defected, and leaders tended to lie low; a great number of them were in government service and felt their livelihood threatened.⁹⁵ Munshiram defended Lajpat Rai from the start in his letter to the *Punjabee* of 12 June 1907. 'We believe that these gentlemen were advocates of constitutional agitation only, and that sedition had no place in their minds.'⁹⁶ When others remained silent, he repeated that 'fearless expression' of his opinion of Lajpat's innocence in the *Civil and Military Gazette* of June 1907, and in his Lahore speech of November 1908.⁹⁷

Munshiram showed the same determination in the celebrated Patiala case.⁹⁸ On 11 and 12 October 1909 the Patiala police rounded up seventy-five Aryas, and imprisoned them in a camp to be tried for sedition by a special tribunal. This was appointed on 12 October, but legal squabbles dragged on for two months, and only on 15 December were regular proceedings instituted. On 6 January 1910 cases against thirty of the accused were withdrawn. On 18 January a petition was presented to the Maharaja by the lawyers for the defence, in which the accused affirmed they were never seditious, apologized for any actions that may have given such an impression, and promised to be careful in the future. There is evidence that the suggestion for this petition came from the Government of India, anxious quickly to terminate a case that

was becoming more and more embarrassing. On 17 February the Maharaja finally declared in answer to the petition:

It was never meant to infer that every member of the Arya Samaj in India or that society was seditious. I am willing to accept this apology and the assurance given and order that the trial of the accused be stopped and proceedings against them withdrawn.⁹⁹

It appeared a considerable victory for the defence, but the final paragraph of the Maharaja's order contained an unexpected sting: all the accused who were in the employ of the state were summarily dismissed, and also banished from the state.¹⁰⁰ It was a severe, indiscriminate punishment imposed on people who had been jailed for four months, on the basis of suspicion only. Condemnation of that action by Indian newspapers was loud and widespread.¹⁰¹ As soon as the case had come up, Munshiram had taken his lawyer's licence out of his drawer, where it had lain for years, and taken up the defence of the accused. Later he sadly reminisced how great 'nationalist' lawyers declined to take up the case, and how even Aryas shied away from it.¹⁰²

Munshiram saw the trials of the Arya Samaj as a great opportunity to revitalize the institution. He warned his fellow Aryas against Arya leaders who displayed cowardice, 'ready, at the slightest official frown, to disown all connection with the work of the Arya Samaj'.¹⁰³ He advised the Aryas 'not to look for guidance and light to those who pose as leaders of the Samaj', and not to think that 'in times of danger your President or Secretary will necessarily come to your rescue'.¹⁰⁴ He advised the Samajists simply to refuse to supply a list of members to officials demanding it,¹⁰⁵ and disapproved of Mulraj's move to exclude from the D.A.V. College Committee members who took part in politics.¹⁰⁶ He was strongly against the proposal that Aryas should make a 'declaration of loyalty', and against expulsion of members partaking in politics.

In a way Munshiram saw the difficulties of the Samaj as the great hour of trial 'when the chaff will be winnowed away, and the grain remain to afford sustenance to and build up the fibres and muscles of our organization'.¹⁰⁷ Aryas should stand firm, and be ready to die for their ideals,¹⁰⁸ they should 'cultivate the grace of faith, and bear the cross'.¹⁰⁹ His Lahore speech was nothing short of apocalyptic.

The spectre of a triumphant Vedic Church is assuming hideous and horrifying shapes and dreadful disguises and scaring people out of their wits . . . Crowned potentates are trembling on their thrones. The civilized world stands astounded and wonderstruck . . . They are mistaken who think that Dharma can be crushed. This is the hour of trial. The Yajna fire has been lighted. The more ghee you will pour into it the more brightly the flames will leap into the air and envelop all things around them burning away impurities. Who can extinguish the flame of Dharma burning steadily in the hearts of true believers?¹¹⁰

Munshiram was turning the tables on the Government. Officials took action against the Arya Samaj because they considered it seditious; the Samaj loudly proclaimed that it was being persecuted because of its faith, at the instigation of 'Sanatanists, Muslims, Christians and Jains [who] think that now is the time to crush us and pulverise us'.¹¹¹

The overall reaction of Munshiram during these three years was extremely individualistic, and no other Arya leader took the same stand. All aspects of his defence of the Arya Samaj were pervaded with passionate emotion. He assumed a position above all divisions and factions, essentially that of a universal leader. It was an all-out defence of the Samaj against what he apocalyptically saw as an all-out persecution, which dominated his words and actions. He saw himself as one called to be the defender of his faith in its greatest hour of trial, and with characteristic passion and enthusiasm he threw himself into this role, speaking out in his typically unrestrained manner.

No wonder that his defence elicited from many high officials a reaction he would not have anticipated, but which is obvious from the Home Department file of July 1911, which dealt with the book *Vindication*.¹¹² C.R. Cleveland, Director of the C.I.D., put it in very strong words:

In this book as well as in his previous writings Munshiram stands out clearly as a bitter bigot, extremely resentful of the attacks that have been made on his sect and justifying to himself counterblows on the plea that they are defensive.

Munshiram, in his letter accompanying the dispatch of the volume to the Viceroy, had expressed the hope 'that the book will lead to a better understanding between the Arya Samaj and the rulers of India and will be the means of strengthening the attachment of the Arya Samaj to the British throne'. Cleveland commented sarcastically, 'It is difficult to believe that any sane person could imagine

that the present book would have any tendency whatsoever to produce such effect'.

The main accusations against the book were the following. 'The most objectionable part is chapter V (pages 138 ff)', where Dayananda's attacks on other religions are justified 'by showing that other writers have been even more scurrilous and blasphemous in writing of the Christian, Mahomedan, Hindu and other religions than he has'. These ninety pages are aptly described. But it is important to note that they were not compiled by Munshiram, but by Ramdeva, the co-author, who had collected there the most offensive paragraphs mostly written by European authors about various religions. Two passages in the second part compiled by Munshiram were also considered by the legal officers to be actionable under the Press Act. The first was part of Munshiram's 1908 Lahore anniversary speech, where he accused government officials of having 'betrayed the implicit trust reposed in them by their and our Royal Master', and proceeded to give instances of persecution of Aryas 'for no better reason than this that they belong to a particular church'. The other objectionable passage was Appendix VII of the work, which listed similar examples. It was felt that 'such remarks are calculated to excite disaffection towards the British administration in India'.

However, the highest authorities did not agree with this assessment put forward by their officers. According to Chief Secretary Hore, the Lieutenant-Governor of the U.P. took a milder view of the possible impact on communal strife of Chapter IV, and of the 'incitement to disaffection' which might result from the passages written by Munshiram. The Lieutenant-Governor felt that Munshiram had 'allowed his zeal to get the better of his judgement and self control. He does not give me the idea of being opposed to the British Government'. Secretary Butler commented in the same vein, 'I know the author of the book personally and believe him, despite some appearances, to be genuinely anxious to establish better relations'. Butler also wrote:

I can personally testify to the change that has come over the Arya Samaj recently and which is tending to emphasize its religious and social aspect. Time is doing its work, and allowance should be made for the natural exasperation caused to the Arya Samaj by the unfortunate Patiala proceedings.

The result of these consultations was that the Government decided that any official reaction to the book would be inopportune.

especially as it seemed that the volume, after several months, had attracted only little publicity; any Government action would only draw attention to it.

This decision was in line with a change in the attitude of the Government noticeable from 1910 onwards. Early that year the Lieutenant-Governor had agreed, in response to a letter from Durga Prasad, that the Arya Samaj was not a political, but a religious body, although it was made clear that the statement primarily referred to the Gurukul section of the Samaj.¹¹³ But one can say that the crisis was over, and that the years 1910-11 passed in relative peace, though the Government did not officially admit to a clear change of policy.

At the beginning of 1913, the Government finally took some public measures to indicate its new attitude, and made a special point of staging a deliberate gesture at the Gurukul. Sir James Meston, Lieutenant-Governor of the U.P., visited the Gurukul in March 1913. His public speech there was quite explicit:

I wanted to meet a community which had been described in official papers as a source of infinite, terrible and unknown danger. The best answer to this was to come myself. I have been more than rewarded by visiting one of the most wonderful, interesting and stimulating institutions. I will not talk of the political aspect of the question where politics are unknown.¹¹⁴

This must have been felt by Munshiram to be a day of triumph.

One of the factors in this change of attitude, and one of the reasons for the deliberate move of the Government to focus its attention on Munshiram and the Gurukul, was no doubt the influence of C.F. Andrews. He had joined the Cambridge Mission in Delhi in 1904, as a teacher at St. Stephen's College, and he first met Munshiram probably in late 1912. Towards the end of January 1913 he visited the Gurukul and wrote about his impressions in the *Modern Review* of March that year in what can only be called lyrical terms:

Here was the India that I had known and loved—the India of my dreams . . . I saw before me that Motherland, not worn and sorrowful, beautiful only in decay, but ever fresh and young with the spring tinge of immortal youth . . . Here in the Gurukul was the New India.¹¹⁵

The friendship that sprang up between him and Munshiram was immediate and intensive, as the extensive correspondence clearly shows.¹¹⁶

The letters indicate that Andrews was very close to both Lord

Hardinge and Sir James Meeson, and that he repeatedly pleaded with them on behalf of the Arya Samaj, and especially of Munshiram and his Gurukul. In a letter of 26 May 1913 from Simla he referred to a conversation with the Viceroy, to whom he had said,

Let the Arya Samaj be *trusted* by the Government instead of being persecuted let them be *trusted* above all let them at the present time feel themselves bound up by the ties of deepest loyalty to you personally let them feel themselves to be your body-guard let them feel that you *trusted* them with all your heart and that would be worth all the police protection in the world.¹¹⁷

The Viceroy answered that he wished that with all his heart, and he inquired from Andrews about Munshiram. Andrews replied, 'If you asked me to put my head on the block and be beheaded if I were wrong I would joyfully and gladly take up the challenge'.

Andrews wrote from Simla on 8 June 1913 that he was about to spend three days with the Viceroy and Lady Hardinge, and that Sir James Meeson would also be present,¹¹⁸ and in a later letter he mentioned that Lord Hardinge had written him a letter in which he said that he would 'gladly accept your suggestion to see Mr Munshi Ram'¹¹⁹ On 10 September Andrews wrote that 'the Viceroy told me that Sir Michael O'Dwyer had been very happy about [your visit] and it had left a very happy impression'.¹²⁰ In a later letter of 22 May 1914 Andrews mentioned that the Viceroy's intended visit to the Gurukul had been postponed on account of C.I.D. pressure, no doubt justified by the Delhi conspiracy case. In fact, by that time Andrews himself was being viewed with great suspicion by the C.I.D. because of his connection with Amir Chaud and the Delhi Conspirators, and for having written an introduction to the works of Swami Ram Tirtha, parts of which were considered seditious.¹²¹

The intense friendship with C.F. Andrews thus helped in those two pre-war years to create a better atmosphere between the Gurukul and the Government, and it also provided Munshiram with great satisfaction. The friendship was indeed a very deep one. Andrews was passing through a very trying crisis in his own life, and looked upon Munshiram as his 'elder brother', for whom he felt 'a great love that could only have come from God, one of the greatest gifts I have ever received from his hands'. He saw himself and Munshiram 'as twin souls to one common Divine Mother—as You have taught me to use the word of the One whose Name is Love and whose love no human word can express'¹²² J.S. Hoyland,

who visited the Gurukul with Andrews, has left a penetrating account of the conversations of the two:

It was immensely instructive to listen to a conversation between these two great men. Munshi Ram was a magnificent figure of a man, with a thin ascetic face, and a huge hooked nose. He looked like an Afghan. Many, indeed most, of his ideas were poles asunder from those of C.F.A. He was very emphatic, sometimes definitely dogmatic, in his statements of his views. But C.F.A. listened patiently, made no comment on what was repellent but took pains to bring out by further questioning and discussion what was of permanent value. In those conversations one could see 'that of God' in the intellectual and spiritual outfit of Mahatma Munshi Ram being reached, emphasized, developed, by the quiet and humble fashion in which C.F.A., ignoring the less worthy parts of his friend's views, asked for further information on and implied deep interest in the more worthy parts. Munshi Ram's personality was by far the most striking and in a sense 'effective'. C.F.A. was content to take a very secondary place, to sit back and listen most of the time, now and then throwing in a suggestion or asking a question which strengthened 'truth' in his friend. In this way was vindicated and established, not Indian 'truth', or British 'truth' nor Hindu 'truth', or dogmatically Christian 'truth', but a new universal Truth.¹²³

After the crisis years, those two years before the First World War were good years for Munshiram. He saw his fight for the Arya Samaj conclude in a truce with the Government. The visits of Meston to the Gurukul in March 1913 and February 1914 not only proclaimed that new spirit, but also highlighted the educational importance of the Gurukul. Meston visited no less than eight other Arya Samaj institutions between 1913 and 1916.¹²⁴ This was but a following-up of the attitude he expressed in mid-1913:

I think that we might very well recognize the growing importance of the Arya Samaj as a moral force that we might show interest in its work, treat it as a community with consideration and consult it whenever possible. In this way we might win over the more moderate elements to our side, and induce them to discourage violence in speech or teaching among its emissaries.¹²⁵

After Meston other eminent visitors came to the Gurukul, among them Ramsay MacDonald. And finally, in October 1916 the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford and his entourage paid a visit to the institution.¹²⁶

His friendship with C.F. Andrews brought Munshiram into contact with Rabindranath Tagore, and especially with Mahatma Gandhi. When in 1913-14 Gandhi asked Gokhale to collect some money to support his South African satyagraha, the Gurukul had responded admirably: by foregoing some extra food and doing

manual work the students collected 1500 rupees for the fund. Gandhi wrote a personal letter of thanks to Munshiram, telling him how C.F. Andrews' description of the Gurukul and its principal made him want to visit him soon. When the pupils of the Phoenix Ashram came to India, they spent several months at the Gurukul, and in April 1915 Mahatma Gandhi himself arrived on his first visit. He said, 'I am proud that Mahatmaji is calling me brother. I do not feel I am worthy of teaching anybody, but I yearn to learn myself from any one who is a servant of his country'¹²⁷ Although in these years Munshiram suffered constantly from a severe hernia and other health problems, they were years of fulfilment and satisfaction.

Heartbreak

Munshiram's happiness was short-lived, however, and great heart-break was in store for him, coming from an unexpected source: his own family.¹²⁸ Munshiram's two sons, Harischandra and Indra had spent their whole youth at the Gurukul, and had been brilliant students, becoming the first two graduates of the college section. In a way the Gurukul and the Arya Samaj were their whole life, confined as they had been to its limits. But as Munshiram himself became increasingly interested in and involved in political matters, their awareness expanded. Their youth and idealism by themselves predisposed them to sympathize with the more radical forms of nationalism. Moreover, although Munshiram himself did not approve of revolutionaries, the Gurukul was in fact always a haven for radicals distrusted by Government. Har Dayal for instance spent a few weeks in the institution. Visitors like these and the surcharged atmosphere of Indian politics, inspired the young students' nationalistic feelings.¹²⁹

By the time they graduated Harischandra and Indra had grown into men, and they were, like their father, men with minds of their own. Their ideas did not always coincide with their father's. At quite an early stage they had had misgivings about their restricted education, and aspired to go and study at Banaras. Indra disliked the visits of high British officials to the Gurukul, and led an agitation to oppose them.¹³⁰ Yet both sons had an enormous love and admiration for their father. As they grew into manhood they wanted to spread their wings. They found the world outside unset-

ting, and their ideas often clashed with Munshiram's. When this led to conflict, their love for him brought about severe feelings of guilt.

After graduation Harischandra stayed on at the Gurukul as a teacher. Indra went to Delhi to a life of tremendous activity. He edited the *Saddharmpracharak*, was active in Arya and Hindu youth organizations, and took his first steps as a writer by composing a novel and laying the groundwork for a book on Bismarck. But life in Delhi had its shocks: he discovered that few people had the kind of dedication he found so natural among the inhabitants of the Gurukul.¹³¹ Within a year he received a very important letter from his father. Munshiram asked him if he would think about giving his life totally to the Gurukul in order eventually to take his place; and for this purpose, would he consider taking a vow of lifelong *brahmacharya*. After consideration, Indra agreed to the suggestion.¹³²

It is clear from the letter that Munshiram had just spoken to Harischandra in the same vein, but without success. In fact, by the end of that year Harischandra had made the break—he refused to sign the fifty-one principles of the Arya Samaj, as expected of Gurukul teachers. He went to Delhi, taking two years' leave from his post.¹³³ Munshiram was bitterly disappointed that his elder son, whom he considered the most gifted, 'let his powers waste away in vain'.¹³⁴ Munshiram's health was very poor, and caused him many painful sleepless nights. He wrote to Indra, 'at this time the presence of one of you is utterly necessary for me', and Indra immediately went to take Harischandra's place. Harischandra first travelled around in a very confused and guilt-ridden state of mind. He wrote to Indra.

The responsibility that arises from studying at the Gurukul and being the son of such a great man,—I do not have the inner strength to take it up . . . Possibly I do not belong to that category of Mahatmas who can destroy all selfishness in the pursuit of one goal. But the manner of my education has forced me into that rank.¹³⁵

The letter ends with a vague promise of returning soon, and a word of thanks for money sent by Indra.

Indra too was having difficulties in readjusting his life to the Gurukul mould, having experienced a wider scope for his idealism. He admitted that he was not at the Gurukul by choice, but because

it was his father's wish.¹³⁶ He had come to his own conclusions as far as political involvement by Aryas was concerned: 'The Arya Samaj having banned politics has put itself behind the times.'¹³⁷ He found the 'sectarian' type of Arya, supremely exemplified in his senior colleague Ramdeva, most irrational and narrow-minded. The way in which Ramdeva constantly extolled Swami Dayananda and declared him to have been the initiator of all progressive movements, was particularly irritating to Indra. When trouble erupted in Patiala between Aryas and Sikhs leading to a court-case, he deplored the incidents because 'such quarrels were disruptive of national unity'.¹³⁸

The eruption of the First World War caused great upheaval in the Indian political arena, and was bound to have its repercussions on Munshiram's family at this crucial stage of its development. Munshiram's letter of 4 December 1914 to C F. Andrews gives some details.¹³⁹ Harischandra had started his own daily *Vijay*, and both this paper and the *Saddharmpracharak* were under threat by the Government, whose suspicions were sharpened by the outbreak of the war. Financially weak as the papers were, they were now seriously threatened by a demand for security money. Munshiram was categorical about Harischandra's *Vijay*: 'His paper goes and he shall have to shift for himself' As for his own *Saddharmpracharak*, he decided to bring it back to the Gurukul immediately. He succeeded in avoiding the deposition of further security money by giving an assurance that henceforth the paper would be under his own 'personal supervision'.

This letter also contained another rather mysterious reference. It says that both his son Indra and his son-in-law Dr Sukhdeo had offered to help in the British war effort by serving in the Indian Ambulance Corps. The offer had been made in their name by Munshiram, and the only other person aware of it was Harischandra. Munshiram complained that he had not received any reply to this offer, a complaint he renewed in a letter of 18 January 1915 to Lord Meston. The mystery lies in the lack of any reference to this in Indra's biography, and so far we have not succeeded in discovering any other reference to it.

The big shock came in December 1914: suddenly Harischandra left the country, without taking leave of his father or even saying farewell to his wife and child. Munshiram was thunderstruck; he was even unaware of his son's destination. He succeeded in

contacting him before he sailed from Bombay, and on 22 December he wrote to Andrews,

Harischandra could sail only last Sunday and I am glad to be able to tell you that instead of proceeding direct to America, he has gone, under my advice, to England and intends, with Kumar Mahendra Pratap, to join the ambulance corps to the front, if they will only let them be useful.¹⁴⁰

He repeated this in his letter to Lord Meston of 18 January 1914.¹⁴¹ It is difficult to believe that Munshiram could have clung to that conviction for very long. Very soon Harischandra's real destination and purpose had become clear to him.

The biographer has to reconstruct Harischandra's movements from the few scattered references in Indra's biography and in the autobiographies of Raja Mahendra Pratap and Lala Lajpat Rai. The Raja certainly did not have ambulance service in mind when he left India; in fact he does not seem to have had any intention of going to England. He sailed from Bombay to Marseilles, from where he proceeded to Geneva. There he met Shyamji Krishna Varma and Har Dayal, who suggested he go to Berlin to meet the Kaiser. He then joined up with the revolutionary Chattopadhyay, and they went together to the German capital. His intention was to become a kingpin in the German plan to push its army through Afghanistan to attack the British on Indian soil. To the end he remained an expatriate rebel.¹⁴²

It is difficult to sort out Harischandra's intentions from what Pratap says: 'I secured the services of Mr Harischandra . . . It was agreed that he would go with me to Europe and returning in two or three months he would edit my "Nirbal Sewak" at Dehradun'. Harischandra accompanied him to Geneva and was with him when he met Har Dayal and Shyamji. Although he did not travel with the Raja to Berlin, he later joined him there.¹⁴³ He was back in Geneva by March, from where he wrote to Indra

From father's letters I gather that he is not happy with my journey. Subhadra on her part wrote that people are saying things about me at the Gurukul. It makes her very downhearted. Moreover, I do think that it is an injustice to thrust such a heavy burden on you. Thinking about all that I have decided to come back soon from over here. First I wished to stay here a bit longer to instruct myself. But now I see that my time is up. . . One matter. If my letters have not been destroyed, please keep them safely. I have not been able to make notes of what I wrote in them. Keep also the letters I wrote to father.¹⁴⁴

Surprisingly, his next letter came from London, dated 23 April. He was very preoccupied with the pain he was causing his family, particularly his father:

I have wanted to write a long letter to father, but my heart breaks in the process. I have increased his worries to such an extent that I do not know how I can write him anything. At times I have begun to feel that I am totally unworthy of father and of you. Previously I thought that it is the world that is such a strange place that I cannot work properly in it. But now my pride has been broken. Now I understand that perhaps it is all my own fault. My mind is so sad today that I cannot write any more.¹⁴⁵

Harischandra was obviously extremely unsettled, but the mystery thickens. From England he somehow made his way to the U.S.A. Lajpat Rai met him in May 1915 in San Francisco, and wrote that Harischandra 'gave himself out as the agent of the Indian Revolutionary Party of Berlin who had been entrusted to go to India with money'.¹⁴⁶ On 17 September 1915 Harischandra wrote to Indra from Niagara Falls, 'This may be my last letter that will reach you before I arrive home'. The reason for this decision was that he had read in the *Saddharmprachāra* that his father had decided to enter *sannyās* in November that year: 'I want once more to meet father as his son before he enters *sannyās*.' He had bought his ticket for England and only some fateful disaster could hold him back. 'What will happen when I arrive home, that will be seen.' He pleaded with Indra to have the ceremony postponed in case he could not arrive in time. He asked, 'When will the paper come out? Bring it out from January, then I will start to write my account in it.' This letter contained a clear commitment to return with plans for work, and also expressed the fear of 'what may happen'.¹⁴⁷

Lajpat Rai met Harischandra again in July 1916, this time in New York. He recalls that Harischandra told him he had gone to England in late 1915 to transmit a sum of money for the revolutionaries; he had been arrested and detained for ten days; then he had been ordered to go to France, from where he slipped into Switzerland, whence he came back to the U.S.A. Lajpat Rai added that at that time he had the growing suspicion, shared by some of the revolutionaries, that Harischandra had become a paid agent of the British Secret Service.¹⁴⁸

After this a curtain falls on Harischandra's movements. The first clue is a letter written about two years later from the U.S.A.,

about mid-1917. Hariachandra had read the account of his father's *sannyās* in the *Saddharmprachārak*, and was very regretful: 'This sadness will remain with me forever that I was unable to perform that service for him, which was my duty' There is no glimpse of an intention or even a desire to return home: 'Dear brother, now the burden of the family is wholly upon you. . . . Please arrange things so that Subhadra may remain in the Gurukul, and that she never may feel that she is a stranger and a burden on others.'¹⁴⁹ Hariachandra had finally made a clear option, and it did not include a return in the near future. The weekly *Shradhdā* gives us a last hint. It refers to letters from Hariachandra to Indra which reveal that in March 1919 Hariachandra was in London, and after that he was for seven months interned in Portugal. The letter relating this was written in November 1919. Nothing more is heard, except that he mysteriously disappeared somewhere in the U.S.A.¹⁵⁰

The mystery remains, but the little that is known makes one thing very clear: that Munshiram must have undergone great agony in this period. He felt that his eldest son, the one most gifted, was squandering his life and future. He must soon have learnt of Hariachandra's revolutionary associations, and the suspicions that he had become a British spy. He felt deeply and personally hurt by them, especially after having stated that his son was going to England to join the Ambulance Corps. Although Munshiram's political attitudes changed over these years, on one issue he had remained consistently adamant: the wickedness and irresponsibility of any form of rebellion or revolutionary activity. It is no wonder that in June 1915, by which time he knew what had happened, he wrote to the Pratinidhi Sabha President, Shri Ramakrishna about his intention to enter *sannyās* in November that year. But that gentle yet firm man, a very close friend who always stood by him, kept urging him to keep on for the sake of the Gurukul. Finally, in August, Munshiram gave in:

I have now understood that it is my fate. I will do the work as well as I am able, notwithstanding the continued obstacles put by my colleagues. If before (I am able to take *sannyās*) my death occurs, then there will be joy, because my funeral rites will be conducted by my own family.¹⁵¹

So, heavy-hearted with his grief over Hariachandra, and continuously harassed by the persistent machinations of Arya op-

ponents even within his own institution, he carried on for another eighteen months. During this time Indra too had to revise his plans for his own life. The continued absence of his elder brother put the extra burden of the latter's wife and child on his shoulders. Agonizingly he reconsidered his decision to remain unmarried, and decided that in the new circumstances this had become nearly impossible.¹⁵² In 1916 he finally took the step. Though his wedding was no doubt an occasion for rejoicing, it also shattered one more of the increasingly disillusioned Munshiram's dreams. On 30 March 1917, ten days after Indra's first son was born,¹⁵³ he communicated his final decision to the Pratinidhi Sabha President:

I have now completely destroyed my body. My deepest wish was to go and stay peacefully in a lonely place to study the books of religion, and to place before the people whatever I found worthwhile to say. But I am reaping the fruits of my own weaknesses. . . . For years I have not been able to accomplish anything in the Gurukul, and staying here has become useless. . . . The best way for me is that one, where I can forget the deeds of people who kill all trust and deceive their friends, and where I can pray to the Lord for blessings on them too.¹⁵⁴

Writings

During these fifteen years Munshiram published, besides his regular contributions to the *Saddharmpracharak*, five books and ten pamphlets. It is an indication of the traumas of that period that the two largest works were apologetic. His *Dukhī Dīl* was written in his own defence, and his *Vindication* in defence of the Arya Samaj. They have been described earlier in this chapter,¹⁵⁵ as also the following two works which resulted from his preparations for the composition of a history of the Arya Samaj: *The Ādim Satyārth Prakāsh* and the collection of Dayananda's letters.¹⁵⁶

The remaining substantial work was his biography of Lekhram.¹⁵⁷ The Panjab Pratinidhi Sabha repeatedly appointed people to write a biography of Lekhram with little success: several started the work, but none got very far. In 1904 the task was given to Munshiram, who finally in 1914 published his *Āryapathik Lekhrām kā jīvan-vrittānt*, a work of over two hundred pages.¹⁵⁸ The biography was written as a chronicle of the Pandit's life with a wealth of detail, anecdote, and quotations, showing the intimate knowledge Munshiram had of his friend, and also his admiration for him. In his judgement of the Pandit the author praises the ascetic simpli-

city of his life, his adherence to truth and a strict ethical code, his trustworthiness, his fearlessness, his total dedication to religious propaganda, his lightning wit, and the abundance of his publications. Yet Munshiram was not blind to the serious shortcomings of his friend: he acknowledged that he was excessively stubborn and too quick to burst into uncontrolled anger, and also that he saw all issues in terms of black and white and could not compromise, a characteristic that harmed the effectiveness of his work.¹⁵⁹

In the fifteenth chapter Munshiram enumerated the many court actions initiated by Muslims against Lekhram's writings in Amritsar, Mirzapur, Allahabad, Lahore, Meerut, Delhi and Bombay. The Muslims' attempts kept failing, and threats were made on his life. 'Arya brethren sent letters to Lahore from different places to make the Pandit aware of this fact, but who could protect him? Our hero had deleted the word "fear" from his dictionary, and did not take the slightest notice of the threats of men.'¹⁶⁰ By the time Munshiram had finished this work he had gone through critical years defending the Arya Samaj, and the final pages are obviously influenced by that experience. He stated that the blood of the martyr Lekhram had sown the seeds of other martyrs who followed his footsteps, and that yet the 'goddess of *dharma*' still kept up her wail: 'My son Lekhram! My hero! Have you gone forever on your eternal journey? Will you never come back again?'¹⁶¹

Between 1914 and 1917 Munshiram wrote nine pamphlets in a series called *Ārya-Dharm-Granth-Mālā*. Three of these were meant to help Aryas lead a proper Vedic life. *Āryon kī Nitya Karm Paddhati* is a simple exposé of daily routine, especially directed at Arya women.¹⁶² Besides referring to religious duties, it gives advice on a number of extremely practical matters concerned with diet, hygiene, ventilation, and cleanliness. The other two pamphlets, *Pāñc Mahāyajnon kī Vidhi* and *Vasiārpūrvak Sandhyā-Vidhi* put in simple and clear language the daily religious duties of Aryas.¹⁶³

In his pamphlet *Āchārānāchār aur Chhūt-Chhūt*, 'Morality and Untouchability', Munshiram followed Dayananda's ideas in showing the proper relationship between morality and untouchability.¹⁶⁴ Right at the start he enunciated the guiding principle: 'If a man becomes a better person by being chained in the bonds of untouchability, then we will call it morally good; if, however,

untouchability leads to an increase in envy, enmity, pride and other vices, then we will have to pronounce it immoral'.¹⁶⁵ He was especially concerned with the question of interdining, and proposed the simple rule that the criterion for interdining was not to be derived from the beliefs of the participants, but rather from the nature of the food eaten: good vegetarian food could be shared with anybody, be he Hindu, Christian, or Muslim.

Two pamphlets deal with other religions. *Īsāī Pakshpāt aur Ārya Samāj*, 'Christian prejudice and the Arya Samaj',¹⁶⁶ was written directly in reaction to the publication of J.N. Farquhar's *Modern Religious Movements in India*.¹⁶⁷ Munshiram saw this book as part of the missionary plot to make the Government suspicious of the Arya Samaj. He was particularly incensed by the doubt that Farquhar cast on Dayananda's sincerity in a vital matter, by suggesting that the Swami's doctrines about Vedic revelation were not a matter of conviction, but rather of diplomacy. For this Farquhar used the flimsy arguments put forward by Pandit Agnihotra, an avowed arch-enemy of the Swami's and of the Samaj, and the second-hand statement of a German missionary. Munshiram countered these arguments passionately, and the whole pamphlet is pervaded by a feeling of bitter resentment. In answer to Farquhar's prophecy 'that the Arya Samaj would have no great history', Munshiram concluded his pamphlet thus: 'The Padres have to understand that their base, underhand, and haughty behaviour has given a very serious blow to the Christian Missions. They will not be able to ward it off by making the Arya Samaj into a scapegoat.'¹⁶⁸

The other pamphlet on religion, entitled *Pārsī Mat aur Ārya Dharm*, 'The Parsi doctrine and the Aryan religion', was first published in Urdu in the *Ārya Musāfir Magazine* of October 1900, and republished in Hindi as a pamphlet in this series.¹⁶⁹ This booklet is very different in tone and content from the former. After stating that the structures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are based on Zoroastrianism which preceded them in time, the author set out to prove his thesis that in fact Zoroastrianism was nothing but a corrupt version of the Vedic religion. Various arguments were used to prove this assertion such as: old Parsee names were derived from the *Vedas*; the *Avesta* mentions the *Vedas*; Sanskrit was the origin of the language of the *Avesta*; the latter refers to Vedic heroes and sages, and even to puranic deities.

For this composition Munshiram's main source was M. Haug's *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of the Parsis*,¹⁷⁰ from which he selected whatever he considered useful in strengthening his own argument. His main thesis was derived from Dayananda's conception that the Vedas are eternal, antedate time itself, and are the origin of all religious developments in the world. Neither the thesis of this pamphlet nor its very shaky arguments display any originality or real scholarship.

The pamphlet *Mānva-Dharma-Shāstra tathā Shāstrano-paddhantī*, 'Human Jurisprudence and the Law', was written 'because it is necessary for the common people to have some knowledge of the law of their land'¹⁷¹ After some consideration of the ancient law-givers of India, the bulk of the booklet is no more than a summary, and in places a translation, of parts of T.E. Holland's *Jurisprudence*.¹⁷² Very dryly and concisely it deals with the sources of laws and rights, their divisions and sub-divisions, and the different branches of private, public, and international law. On the whole it is a dull summary of lengthy definitions, which could only have been of use to students beginning a law course.

A small work, specifically intended for the students of the Gurukul, was published outside that series, the *Vedāntakūl Sankshipt Manuśrīti*, 'Concise Manuśrīti in accordance with the Vedas'.¹⁷³ It is simply a collection of verses from the *Laws of Manu*, presented in Sanskrit without any commentary. Munshiram stated that in the available edition of the *Laws of Manu* it was very difficult to decide either the authorship or the date of any particular verse because of continuous interpolations in the text down the centuries. He himself made his selection of verses using purely internal criteria referring to their content. Two types of texts were excluded. The first were verses not in accordance with Vedic teaching, such as those referring to *Śrāddh* or to the consumption of meat. The other type excluded consisted of verses treating questions which were not the proper subject matter of the lawbooks, such as cosmology or philosophy. In its layout the booklet follows the original division of chapters and arrangement of verses, simply omitting the lines considered unacceptable.

CHAPTER V

The call of Gandhi and politics, 1917–22

'This movement has become for our people a question of Life and Death'

On 12 April 1917, on the last day of that year's Gurukul festival, Munshiram took *sannyās* in the presence of 20,000 witnesses. The ancient ceremony symbolized the final severance of the bonds of the old life: he performed his own funeral rites and shed the garments characteristic of Mahatma Munshiram. The outward indications of the entrance into a new state of life was the shaving of head and beard, the assumption of the ochre robe, and the acceptance of a new name.²

It is faith (*shraddhā*) that was the inspiration of the life I have led so far. Faith has always been the revered goddess of my life. Today also it is faith that has driven me to enter the state of *sannyās*. That is why, invoking as witness this sacrificial fire, I name myself Shrauddhananda, so that I may succeed in filling my future life too with that same faith.³

Even in this most traditional rite, Munshiram affirmed his strong individuality. Normally the candidate named another *sannyāsī* as his *guru*, who then conducted part of the ceremony; Munshiram declared God to be his *guru*, and performed all rites himself.⁴ Shortly afterwards the new Swami took yet another step to cut the ties of the past: he destroyed all the notes he had collected for bringing his autobiography up to date. 'All this now seems to me false pride', he wrote to Indra.⁵ Munshiram had during the previous two decades loosened, and even cut some of the many bonds that restricted him, such as those of family connections, those of his professional career, and of the power structure of the Arya Samaj, and even those of personal property. His acceptance of *sannyās* now sanctioned and sanctified his freedom in the eyes of all Hindus. As a *sannyāsī* he was a totally free individual not answerable to any demands of the social or ritual power structures of Hinduism.

Retirement disturbed

The Swami went to Gurukul Kurukshetra with the intention of resuming his work on the history of the Arya Samaj. Soon he set out on a two months' tour of the Panjab in order to collect more materials, and after that he resettled quietly at the Gurukul Kangri on the invitation of both the Gurukul and the Pratinidhi Sabha authorities. Thus the Swami was able to spend the few remaining months of 1917 peacefully working at his history.

But 1918 brought three disturbances that drew him away from his desk. The first was the Garhwal famine, which started towards the end of 1917 and reached its peak in early 1918. On 23 April, Shraddhananda published an appeal for funds in the Lahore Urdu daily *Desh*, which was followed two days later by a similar appeal by Mahatma Hansraj. On 3 May the Swami left for Garhwal, and spent three months organizing camps and relief operations in that harsh and inhospitable mountainous tract. During this time he laboured in close collaboration with the workers of Pandit Malaviya's Allahabad Seva Samiti.⁶

Scarcely had the Swami settled back into the Gurukul when another mission called him away in August to Dholpur in Rajasthan, where the Aryas were experiencing great difficulties. The local authorities had appropriated the Arya Samaj grounds and closed their *mandir*, intending to use the site for the state bank. These events were published in the papers, and led to a call for satyagraha. Shraddhananda arrived on 25 August and took the lead. Notice of the circumstances and of the proposed action was communicated to the Maharana and to the Viceroy. This led to a meeting between Aryas and officials who arrived at the following compromise: the grounds would remain in the possession of the state bank; the place of *havan*, the offering of ghee in the fire, would be closed off and would not be used for any other purpose, and the Samaj would be given another plot in the town for building a new *mandir*. The Aryas were also given permission to perform a final *havan* for three days on the old sacred spot. However, when the Aryas started to do this, they were showered with stones by the assembled populace, and had to be taken by the police to the Dak Bungalow for their protection. The Swami immediately demanded from the Maharana and the political agent that an inquiry commission be appointed to investigate the matter. But the Maharana was on

holiday, and it took the authorities a long time to finally settle everything.⁷

The Swami was not meant to have any undisturbed time to write that year. Soon after his return from Dholpur the Gurukul was struck by the fierce influenza epidemic that raged at the end of 1918. During October and November he nursed the sick until the contagion subsided.⁸ Perhaps he hoped to find rest on his own, away from the Gurukul, when in December he moved to Delhi, where he settled in a house in Naya Bazar, made available to him by his friend Seth Ragghumal Lohiya.⁹ He got his notes on the history of the Arya Samaj out again, and resumed his work. Little did he know that within a couple of months he would be swept into the political vortex of the Rowlatt Satyagraha.

Back at the Gurukul, February 1920–October 1921

But before the political career of the Swami between 1919 and 1923 is recounted, it seems appropriate first to tell the story of his temporary recall to the institution he founded. The Gurukul steadily deteriorated after the Swami left, and was losing many students.¹⁰ The Pratinidhi Sabha leaders approached the Swami and pleaded with him to return to the institution in order to prevent a total collapse. They felt quite desperate and were ready to accept the conditions on which the Swami would agree to return. He wanted a free hand without interference from the Panjab-based Gurukul Committee in either management or curriculum; he demanded that a special committee be formed for financial matters; and that he be given a clear brief to reopen the agricultural section and to start an economic faculty.¹¹

In July 1920 the Swami launched an appeal for two million rupees to establish a permanent fund for the Gurukul. He had plans to travel all over India, 'leaving no corner untouched', to solicit contributions. He would start from Calcutta, then go to Madras, Bombay, the Panjab, and would also visit Burma for the same purpose. However, on the very first lap of his journey, in Calcutta, he once again succumbed to illness and had to return to the Gurukul. On 22 October the Swami set off for Burma, sailing from Calcutta in the *Angora* on 27 October. He arrived two days later and stayed for one month, travelling around from city to city. This journey put an end to his drive for funds, as the political

scene took more and more of his time. The total collected was only sixty thousand rupees, far from the target, but sufficient to start an Ayurvedic College at the Gurukul.¹²

In the meantime, notwithstanding the assurances given, the Gurukul wrangles resumed. The Prakash party launched yet another sustained and bitter attack on the way the Gurukul was developing, and the Swami ran once more into trouble with the Pratinidhi Sabha. The issues were the old ones, and the bitterness the same.¹³ But the Swami stood his ground and finally, on 22 March 1921, the Sabha passed a number of resolutions sanctioning his policies. The Gurukul would develop into a comprehensive University, with specialist schools of Vedic Study, General Study, Ayurvedic Medicine, Agriculture, and Economics. An independent Vidyasabha would be established to run the Gurukul University.¹⁴

The 1921 anniversary, the last with the Swami as head of his beloved Gurukul, was a special occasion. His growing political stature attracted some of the great political figures of the day: Lala Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru, Vitthalbhai Patel, and Madan Mohan Malaviya.¹⁵ When in October that year Shraddhananda left the Gurukul for the second time, he could look back on these twenty months with mixed feelings. He had finally gained from the Pratinidhi Sabha an acceptance of his concept of the Gurukul, and the reorganization of its management. But on the other hand, the old bitterness between Aryas, between colleagues, between committees and administrators, had been reactivated, reopening old wounds that would continue to fester.

1919-22 Annus mirabilis of political engagement

During 1917-18, when the Swami's retirement was disturbed successively by the Garhwal famine, the Dholpur troubles and the influenza epidemic, he remained officially outside politics. But his indirect involvement increased through personal contact and 'behind the scenes' consultations.¹⁶ During the Garhwal famine he grew close to Malaviya, whose stature on the political scene was steadily increasing. At the time of the 1916 Congress meeting the Swami had attended purely as a visitor, but in private discussions he had found himself concurring with Malaviya and

Chintamani's opposition to the Hindu-Muslim pact in as far as it proposed communal representation.¹⁷ Lord Meston asked the Swami to act as an intermediary between Gandhi and Mr Curtis in the affair of the Meston-Marris-Curtis circular.¹⁸ The Swami also had discussions about the coming reforms with Mr Kisch, Montagu's private secretary. Yet, at the Delhi Congress session of December 1918, Shradddhananda went along only as a visitor; he had little interest in political machinations, and went back to his writing after the session.¹⁹

How is it then that within a couple of months the Swami threw himself heart and soul into political agitation? His son Indra gave the principal answer to this question:

Swamiji had remained completely aloof from active politics up to that time. He did not have the least faith in political games; he considered them to be mere 'show'. But when Gandhi entered the arena of politics with an approach to politics that included self-denial, the Swami was deeply attracted.²⁰

Shradddhananda had always been motivated primarily by religious causes, and he considered political games unworthy and inspired by impure motives, and politicians as mostly men of much show and little principle. Only in Gokhale had he ever met a man whom he could wholeheartedly admire for his total dedication.²¹ Gandhi's new brand of politics immediately appealed to the Swami, as it combined total dedication, self-sacrifice, and religious motives in the Satyagraha method. There was another aspect of Gandhi's approach that attracted him too: the Mahatma was not fighting for some minor political gain, but for the freedom of the whole of India. The Swami never was one to be satisfied with limited goals. Another, more personal reason for this quite sudden leap into politics was the very fact of living in Delhi and being closely associated with his son. Indra had come to the capital at the end of 1918 and started his Hindi daily *Vijay* with the support and blessing of his father.²² Indra had been attracted for years to the national political arena, and his sympathies had always been with radical politics.

The year 1919, *annus mirabilis* for Indian national politics, was also *annus mirabilis* for Shradddhananda as a political figure. From 4 March when he took the Satyagraha vow, to 18 April, there was scarcely a day when he was not on the public rostrum. All the details of his activities have been chronologically related elsewhere.

and need not be recounted here.²³ After a summary account of the Swami's involvement in the events of these memorable seven weeks, there follows an analysis of the motives for his actions and attitudes and of the reasons for their gradual transformation.

Shraddhananda's response to Gandhi's 4 March Satyagraha appeal in protest against the Rowlatt bills was instantaneous, and was sealed in his conversation with the Mahatma the following day.²⁴ Overnight he became, with Indra and Dr Ansari, one of the dominating figures of the Delhi movement, and he addressed the first mass meeting. On 10 March he left for Baroda and Bombay 'to study the Technical and Industrial institutions'.²⁵ This he did for two days in Baroda, but as soon as he reached Bombay he was caught up in the movement set afoot by Gandhi. In the next ten days he addressed mass protest meetings in Bombay, Surat, Broach, and Ahmedabad. On his return to Delhi on 22 March he found that 'the whole agitation had subsided'.²⁶ Three mass meetings then followed each other in quick succession, on 24, 27, and 29 March, where plans were drawn up for a complete hartal on 30 March, and where satyagrahis were enrolled for that purpose.

On 30 March the hartal started very successfully, but also peacefully until an incident occurred at the railway station.²⁷ A dispute arose when satyagrahis tried to exert pressure on local sweetmeat sellers to close their business. This led to arrests, a swelling of the crowd, arrival of troops, a riot, and eventually a volley of shots. The fleeing mob joined another crowd that had gathered near the Clock Tower in Chandni Chowk, where another riot led to a second round of fire. There were many victims: five persons died and fourteen were injured.

Shraddhananda arrived at both places after the shooting, and led the crowd to Pipal Park, where a public meeting was held. After the meeting, the Swami walked back home along Chandni Chowk, followed by a large crowd. On the way they were confronted by a group of Manipuri soldiers approaching from the opposite direction. Accidentally a shot was fired, and the crowd moved in apprehension and indignation. The Swami advanced towards the soldiers who were perplexed and scared by the threatening mass of people. Apparently their officers were not present and they also had difficulty understanding Hindi. They pointed their rifles at the Swami, who bared his breast and invited them to fire. Luckily a European officer arrived on the scene and defused

the situation. This incident firmly established the Swami in the people's mind as an intrepid leader. It also planted in the Swami's mind the firm belief that he was able to control the crowd even in its ugliest mood. He wrote, 'The crowd could contain itself no longer and was about to rush, when a wave of my hand and a short appeal to their vow stopped them'.²⁸

After that 'day of the Delhi martyrs', the capital remained for over two weeks in the grip of confrontation and tragedy. On 31 March the Swami spoke at the funeral service of some of the victims of the shooting, and the following day he attempted to disperse crowds gathered in front of the Clock Tower, and tried to persuade people to reopen their shops. On 3 April he addressed the mourners at the cremation ceremony of a wounded victim who had later died. On 4 April prayers were to be offered at the Jama Masjid for the victims. Muslim dignitaries went to fetch the Swami, brought him to the mosque, and requested him to preach to the congregation from the pulpit. It was an unbelievable and never to be repeated scene: a Hindu *sannyāsi* in his ochre robes preaching from the very pulpit of the greatest mosque in India.

Shraddhananda now became a living symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity. The barring of his breast to the soldiers and his sermon in the Jama Masjid were two intensely dramatic episodes that not only captured the imagination of the inhabitants of Delhi, but that also greatly influenced the Swami himself: both events had that apocalyptic aura, which aroused in him the faith and commitment of a saviour of the people.

Notwithstanding the appeals of the Satyagraha leaders, there was another complete hartal in Delhi on 6 April, and the Swami spoke at the Fatehpur Mosque in the morning and at King Edward Park in the afternoon. The next day was quieter, and he spoke at yet another cremation of a victim of the earlier incidents. On 9 April in the evening, the Swami and a small group of about forty people waited for Gandhi's arrival at the railway station which had been kept secret from the people, but the Mahatma had been detained and prevented from entering the capital. As a result the complete hartal was resumed next day and lasted till 18 April. Things were getting out of hand. Shraddhananda and others repeatedly urged that the hartal come to an end, but to no avail. The secondary leaders of small factions were exercising more and more power, and increasingly lathis began to appear among the

demonstrators. Indra and his *Vijay* seem to have played some part in this agitation. On 14 April C.I.D. officers were assaulted, and the following day a large threatening crowd gathered in front of the Town Hall, where the Satyagraha leaders were conferring with the Delhi authorities. Barron's quick initiative in publicly promising that the leaders would not be arrested, calmed the explosive situation, and the Swami led the crowd away to yet another meeting in Dr Ansari's compound. On 16 April the hartal was lifted as the soldiers had withdrawn, but it was reimposed when, imprudently, the Superintendent of Police rode through the city with a strong guard. Next day business resumed, but an arrest and some false rumours set the mobs moving again: a police picket was attacked, firing ensued, and two men were killed and eighteen wounded.

The authorities now placed Delhi under the Seditious Meetings Act, and the Satyagraha Sabha disbanded after burning its membership list. The funeral procession of 18 April closed the riotous and bloody chapter of the Delhi Rowlatt Satyagraha. Soon afterwards, on 2 May, Shradddhananda resigned from the Satyagraha Committee.²⁹

What were the basic motives and attitudes that inspired Shradddhananda in these tumultuous weeks? First of all, the Swami saw the campaign as a religious crusade. He expressed this clearly in his first telegram to Gandhi. 'Have signed Satyagraha vow just now. Glad to join in this Dharma Yudha [religious war].'³⁰ In his first public speech he stressed that 'the movement was more dharmic than political',³¹ and in his Bombay addresses too the Swami, in the words of the Bombay Government, 'endeavoured to invest the passive resistance movement with a religious significance'.³² When proclaiming the manifesto for the hartal of 30 March, he inserted an extra condition among those contained in Gandhi's manifesto: 'Every person should on that day meditate for half an hour and pray to *Paramātmā* that he may turn the hearts of our opponents'.³³ He subjected himself to a fast on Sundays and to a very restricted eating and drinking regime during this time.³⁴ This accent on the religious side of the agitation was absent in all other leaders, and it somehow set the Swami apart, and out of tune with the rest.

Another way in which the Swami had a rather personal view of the Delhi days, was the extremely dramatic, and even apocalyptic way in which he tended to see it all. What to other politicians or

the rostrum were but catchphrases for the occasion, to the Swami became visions of reality in the fire of his oratory. He halted the funeral procession of one of the Delhi martyrs in front of the Sisganj Gurdwara, and compared the deceased to the martyr Guru Teg Bahadur, reminding his audience that similar sacrifices were necessary if liberty was to be gained.³⁵ He repeated this theme of martyrdom in his famous speech at the Jama Masjid, and at the Fatehpur Mosque he exclaimed:

O God of the Hindus and Mohammedans. The innocent blood of Hindus and Mohammedans should not flow in vain . . . Grant us patience and perseverance so that we may not be deterred by the sight of the blood of the innocent, but may offer thanks to Thee that the innocent were granted power to sacrifice their lives. Their sacrifice has saved the world from bloodshed. Whatever has happened, in that lies thy secret. Grant us power that we may not be afraid of worldly strength, that we may regard military power as worthless and may recognize the piety of the martyrs. May we be prepared to sacrifice ourselves for the freedom and progress of our country. Grant power unto us Asiatics. Give to thirty-two crores of Asiatics the strength of sixty-four crores that we may oppose the power of all materialists and bring forth the reign of peace and tranquillity.³⁶

He saw his speech at the Jama Masjid as one that had national repercussions: 'This was followed by Hindu Sadhus addressing from Muslim pulpits and Masjids and Musalman divines addressing mixed audiences in Hindu temples, in all parts of the country.'³⁷ He saw the fraternization of Hindus and Muslims in that same exaggerated light: 'For full twenty days it appeared that Ramraj had set in . . . Goondas had ceased to exist, every Hindu woman was treated like his own mother, sister or daughter by every Musalman and vice versa.'³⁸

The intensely religious and dramatic character of the Swami's perception blinded him to many of the harsh realities of the situation in the capital, which was a very complex one. The Delhi political scene was one in which many different factions of Hindus and Muslims operated, motivated by a variety of social and economic grievances and aspirations. After the heady, intoxicating first few days of the hartal, the actual leadership of the agitation was assumed by the various leaders of the factions, and the 'national' leaders' authority over the crowds slipped away.³⁹ Shradhdhananda was in both practical and ideological approach too far removed from that kind of politics to be in a position to

manipulate it, or even to be more than vaguely aware of it. There is even cause to wonder whether he realized how much his son Indra was involved with the 'secondary' leadership. One has the feeling that in those days the Swami lived at his own high pace, with his head in the clouds.

That is why his view of the situation and his interpretation of it were different from that of others. He saw a 'Rāmraj', a reign of peace and harmony, where others saw a breeding-ground of violence. He believed he had a magic hold over the crowd and could restrain it from violence, whereas the British observers remarked that after the first few days, although the crowds were always prepared to listen to him, he had no real control over them.⁴⁰ The British thought that the Swami was one of the backroom agitators who wanted to keep the agitation at full pace, yet it is clear that from 5 April he made repeated public efforts to stop the hartal. This suspicion of the British persisted because they could not believe that the Swami was unaware of the part played by Indra in keeping the pot boiling. Whereas the Swami accused the C.I.D. of acting as *agents provocateurs* by posting aggressively violent notices in the city, the British had some evidence that such posters could be traced to Indra's *Vijay* office.⁴¹

This analysis of the attitudes of the Swami is confirmed by a careful study of the long confidential Government file on the proposal to intern him, which was compiled from 8 April. The only tangible proofs offered of his 'incitement to violence' are reports of his public speeches: the Swami tended to get carried away on the public platform. But no concrete proof is forthcoming for his being in any way involved in the behind-the-scenes agitation for continuing the hartal. The file contains only suspicions founded on unspecified reports, presumably originating from C.I.D. men and other informers. The C.I.D. was after the Swami because they were convinced, without ever giving tangible proof, that he was the manipulator of the Delhi Aryas, and also, more perniciously, of those of the surrounding districts, who were starting to come to Delhi bringing their lathis. The secret service was also angered by the repeated accusations by the Swami that C.I.D. men played the vile role of *agents provocateurs*. W.S. Morris's summary in the file of the various reports confirms this:

The most definite things set out against Munshee Ram in these papers are the

speeches of April 4th, April 6th, April 7th, and April 13th. These would I think, clearly have justified action under Rule 3.

Since April 15th it must be admitted that evidence as to overt acts is very scanty. The case rests on Munshi Ram's known disposition towards the Rowlett Acts, the C.I.D., the repressive measures and Government generally; his evident incapacity to restrain his language; his authority as a leading *Arya Samajist*; the fact that Delhi is still a centre from which hostility to Government is still being deliberately aroused; and the strong suspicion that the *Arya Samaj* is being used for the purpose. There is no direct clue connecting Munshi Ram personally with the activities in the surrounding districts.⁴²

The Government seriously considered internment of the Swami in the Panjab or in the U.P., but these provinces did not consider his presence in their territory acceptable. Their banishment to the Central Provinces was mooted, but the final decision was that internment was definitely 'inexpedient'.

Two other aspects of the Swami's attitudes are worth noting. Firstly, it seemed quite contradictory that the man who had recently so passionately proved the non-political character of the *Arya Samaj*, now suddenly assumed a prominent political role. This did confuse some Aryas, and it worried the Swami, as the letter he wrote on 15 March to Indra clearly shows

The Aryas are very perplexed. Write in the *Saddharmpracharak* that Swami Shradddharanda is a *samyāsī*. He has no special connection with any *Arya Samaj* organization. His participation in the Satyagraha does not mean that the *Arya Samaj* is involved in it as an organization. There may well be Aryas who do not approve of the Satyagraha. Among the members too, whoever takes any action, he does so according to his personal conviction. Cowardly and jealous people may speak out in the papers, therefore you should write a note on this matter as you see fit.⁴³

Elsewhere he wrote that 'the *Arya Samajists* appeared thunder-struck' when they saw the Swami suddenly take a leading political role, but he then voiced his satisfaction that practically all of them 'came over to my views and gradually even those who were in the front rank in religious discussions were attracted towards the movement'.⁴⁴ As for his own actions, the Swami justified them by stating that as a *samyāsī* he was a free agent, and stressed the fact that he did not occupy any position in *Arya Samaj* organizations.

It was during this time too that the Swami had his first taste of close collaboration with Gandhi. It was the Mahatma's personality and his new approach to political struggle that had attracted Shrad-

dhananda to the movement, but he was never one to passively accept direction from anyone. Right at the start of the campaign he listened to Gandhi's plan of action, thought it to be ineffective, and countered it with his own proposals. Later he recalled with a hint of sarcasm how Gandhi reacted to his advice:

But Mahatman smiled and said- 'Bhai sahib! You will acknowledge that I am an expert in Satyagraha business. I know what I am about.' There could be no gain-saying the fact and I bowed my head to his decision.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, in the hartal instructions for Delhi, the Swami added to Gandhi's manifesto his own rider about the necessity for a daily half-hour meditation.⁴⁶

It was when the Mahatma suspended the Satyagraha that serious differences of opinion between him and the Swami came to the surface. The Swami explained it all in his letter to Gandhi of 2 May 1919, resigning from the Satyagraha Sabha. The first thing that really upset the Swami, and which he would never forget, was the Mahatma's 'silence about the wilful provocation of Government officials in Delhi and some other places and of the horrors perpetrated in the name of law and order in the Punjab'. He felt that Gandhi was laying the blame for the death of the Delhi martyrs at the door of the Delhi satyagrahis, of whom he was the acknowledged leader. The second difference of opinion between the Mahatma and the Swami was about future tactics. The occurrences of the previous month and the reactions of the Government had convinced Shraddhananda that a civil disobedience campaign could not be launched 'without producing an upheaval among the masses', and that it therefore should not be launched in the certainty of pointless bloodshed.⁴⁷ Gandhi's answering letter did not satisfy the Swami, and he wrote back, angered by the Mahatma's new pronouncement:

Thousands of people have been inspired by their feeling of trust in you, they have taken no notice of what the future may bring them and have given up all worldly worries. The pity is that you at once bring out your pronouncements without even asking those people if they agree.⁴⁸

After his resignation from the Satyagraha Committee the Swami stayed in Delhi, but he remained aloof from the local agitations that kept simmering throughout the rest of the year. However, the events in Delhi had made him an important national political figure, and by the middle of 1919 he was getting closely involved with the Congress High Command. On the invitation of Motilal

Nehru he went in June to Allahabad to participate in a meeting of the Congress Working Committee. There he argued strongly that the venue of that year's Congress session should not be shifted, as was suggested by some, but should remain the city of Amritsar, where the tragic events of Jallianwala Bagh took place. The meeting also arranged for an inquiry into the Panjab occurrences, and the Swami was co-opted to the Committee appointed for that purpose.⁴⁹ It was for the sake of that inquiry that, in the last week of June, Shradhdhananda started touring the Panjab with Motilal Nehru and Malaviya.⁵⁰ There he witnessed at close hand the misery and heartbreak that the excesses of the Martial Law regime had brought to his homeland.

His reluctant decision to accept the office of Chairman of the Reception Committee for the 1919 Amritsar Congress session was partly caused by that experience, but the other reasons that prompted his acceptance clarify his attitude to politics at that time. He himself spelt out these reasons in his opening address at the Congress session: 'I am not standing on this platform today on account of a political movement, but for the fulfilment of a different type of duty.' The first reason why he was there was that he had been urged to take up this task by the imprisoned Panjabi leaders, and been implored to do so by the wives of the political prisoners. The second reason he called 'my *âsram* and its duties', explaining it thus: 'Up to today this Indian National Congress has been carrying out normal political work, but today it has to climb to the summit of religion.'⁵¹ This conviction of the religious dimension of the movement had been strengthened by the advice Gandhi had given him in a letter:

My conviction is that as long as we do not enter into the political field with Dharmic aims, so long will we be unable to succeed in the pure and true amelioration of India. If you become the Chairman of the Reception Committee, you will be able to introduce Dharmic feelings within the Congress.⁵²

Once again it was basically the call of what he saw as a religious crusade that propelled the Swami onto the political platform.

So he took up the formidable task of organizing the practical side of the Congress session in very difficult and adverse circumstances. The great experience in organizing mass meetings acquired at the Gurukul stood him in good stead. When all was ready, an immense downpour swamped the huge *paadal*, and the Swami had to improvise in the organization of accommodation for hund-

reds of delegates pouring into the city. But undaunted, he achieved his task.⁵³

In his reminiscences the Swami recalls only two matters concerning Congress business.⁵⁴ Significantly, both deal with important issues on which Gandhi applied all his pressure to have his own viewpoint adopted. The first was the question of the Congress participation in the Hunter Commission. Gandhi was against it, but many other leaders were in favour. One could say that in a way the Mahatma blackmailed the opposition into accepting his view. The other issue was the resolution about the Montagu Reforms. Here the opposition to Gandhi was very strong, and very ably and skilfully led by C. R. Das. At one point in the discussion the Mahatma even threatened to leave Congress, and the Swami told him:

You advised me to join the Congress in order to spiritualize it. If you intend to work for the reformation of Congress by remaining inside, I am heart and soul with you, but if you want to secede from the Congress in order to oppose it, I will have nothing to do with it.⁵⁵

The discussion ended in a compromise, by which Gandhi in fact succeeded in winning his major points. To the Swami it was another instance of dictatorial behaviour on the part of the Mahatma.

Shradddhananda had put forward his own ideas about the acceptance of the Montagu Reform Scheme in his opening address. After describing the attitudes of the different factions, he said,

The attitude of the moderates to accept the Scheme, and that of the radicals not to accept it are both meaningless. Be the Scheme good or bad, full or incomplete—it has been imposed on us. If the whole nation in unison were ready to reject those rights, then there would be some sense in rejecting them. But that is not possible now. Why then should there be a quarrel?⁵⁶

His advice was, according to Tilak's dictum, 'Whatever is given, accept it, but keep agitating for what remains'. The Swami was in favour of Congress expressing its thanks to Montagu:

In the name of India's ancient culture, I appeal to you all that you do not let this unprecedented occasion go by and do not let the blot of ungratefulness disfigure your foreheads. But the meaning of an expression of gratitude is not that agitation for the remainder of our rights be abandoned.⁵⁷

In one paragraph the Swami also touched upon the problems of the untouchables. These were to occupy his mind increasingly, and it is worth recalling how strongly he expressed his feelings at the Amritsar Congress:

Is it not true that so many among you who make the loudest noises about the acquisition of political rights, are not able to overcome their feeling of revulsion for those sixty millions of ladies who are suffering injustice, your brothers whom you regard as untouchable? How many are there who take these wretched brothers of theirs to their heart? Give deep thought

and consider how your sixty million brothers—broken fragments of your own hearts which you have cut off and thrown away—how these millions of children of Mother India can well become the anchor of the ship of a foreign government. I make this one appeal to all of you, brothers and sisters. Purify your hearts with the water of the love of the motherland in this national temple, and promise that these millions will not remain for you untouchables, but become brothers and sisters. Their sons and daughters will study in our schools, their men and women will participate in our societies, in our fight for independence they will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with us, and all of us will join hands to realize the fulfilment of our national goal.⁵⁸

After the Congress session the Swami was about to set out on yet another begging tour, this time in order to collect funds for the purchase of the Jallianwala Bagh and the erection of a memorial to the martyrs. But in early 1920 he was suddenly recalled to the Gurukul to again take up its management.⁵⁹ This stay kept him removed from the day-to-day Delhi political scene. But his role in the Delhi Satyagraha and in the Amritsar Congress session had introduced him to the sphere of the high command of the Khilafat movement and of all-India Congress politics. Although he was again intimately connected with the Arya Samaj, he could not give up politics, and he felt it to be his duty to make this clear to the Panjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. He wrote to the President:

At this time it is my opinion that the future of our country depends on the active propagation of a program of non-cooperation. If this movement remains unfulfilled and Mahatma Gandhi does not find cooperation, then the question of the freedom of the country will be set back fifty years. This has become for our people a question of life and death. I am, therefore, about to engage myself in this work. If in your opinion I should withdraw myself from my work in the Arya Samaj and the Gurukul in order to get involved in that task, then I will make a public statement according to your written advice. I cannot remain separate from that task. At this time that task seems to me to be of paramount importance.⁶⁰

The Swami must have been given the green light, because his involvement in politics increased, and he even started a new paper from the Gurukul, called *Shradhdhā*, in which political comment was prominent.

During the next three years he stayed at the centre of Congress

policy-making. He himself has recalled the details in his *Inside Congress*. The interest here is in tracing the two main developments in the Swami's attitudes. Firstly, increasing disagreements with Gandhi and a growing concern for the untouchables sorely neglected by Congress eventually led to a break-away from Congress in 1922. Secondly, the Swami's attitudes to the Muslims underwent a gradual change and his concern for Hindu unity came more and more to the fore.

Disagreements with Gandhi

The Swami's disagreements with Gandhi were all related to two central issues: the methods used by the Mahatma in his campaigns, and the increasingly despotic nature of his leadership. In his *Shraddhā* of 14 May 1920 the Swami published a letter to Gandhi in which he strongly identified himself with the Khilafat cause, but criticized some of the proposed methods for the campaign. He agreed with the resignation of titles and of office by high officials, but he was concerned for 'the lakhs of civil and military servants who will find it extremely difficult to hold on to their satyagraha once they are severed from their very livelihood'. He was also disturbed by the talk of some Muslim leaders about *hijrat*, voluntary exile from India, which he considered a dangerous and fruitless exercise. He suggested that non-cooperation should start with the top officials and, if necessary, should only be asked from the lower orders after provision had been made for the upkeep of their families ⁶¹

With the approach of the Special Calcutta Congress, Shraddhananda's criticism of Gandhi's methods became more articulate and incisive: 'Mahatma Gandhi's non-cooperation is too narrow . . . it is one-sided, as it is purely destructive and not constructive. I wish that non-cooperation and cooperation go hand-in-hand, and be implemented at the same time' He specified two concrete areas of cooperation. Panchayat courts should be established in all towns and villages to deal with civil disputes, thus inaugurating non-cooperation with British courts, but at the same time fostering co-operation between castes and religious groups. The other proposal was for collaboration with the mass of untouchables, 'the foundation stone of our nationhood', by receiving them into all organizations with equal rights, and by accepting their children

into all schools. Later he added to these two the 'nationalization' of education by severing all private and aided schools from the state system.⁶²

The Special Congress session of September 1920 in Calcutta brought the Swami nothing but disappointments. Its resolution about a 'gradual boycott of British courts' was repugnant to him because it had 'a smell of mental violence'. As for the untouchable question, that was not even considered:

Mahatma Gandhi too thought it to have been the right decision that this question not be raised. That was a grave mistake. Only at that time can non-cooperation with an enemy nation become a possibility, when full cooperation between ourselves has been achieved.

Gandhi's proposal to gradually withdraw students from government, government-aided, and government-dependent schools, as national schools were being founded, was an error, because so many national schools were already available. The Swami, who had himself the development of a 'national' Gurukul to his credit, was particularly incensed with Lajpat Rai, 'who arrogantly declared that besides himself no one had understood the essence of national education. In my opinion Lalaji himself has failed to understand what national education means for India.'⁶³

In September 1921 the Swami again wrote a long letter to Gandhi about his methods and their inefficacy. He admitted that a few titles had been renounced, a few lawyers had resigned, a few students had left school, but added, 'in my opinion we have gained nothing by that agitation'.⁶⁴ When the Mahatma decided that there should be a demonstration of burning foreign cloth, the Swami sent him a wire imploring him 'not to generate hatred against foreigners and to allow the discarded clothes to be distributed among the starving and the naked poor of India'.⁶⁵ Yet, reconciled by the Mahatma's arguments, he bowed before his decision. But he was in for a severe shock:

While people came to the conclusion that the burning of foreign cloth was a religious duty of the Indians and Das, Nehru and other topmost leaders made a bonfire of cloth worth thousands, the Khilafat Muslims got permission from Mahatmajī to send all foreign cloth for use of their Turkish brethren. This again was a great shock to me. While Mahatmajī stood adamant and did not have the least regard for Hindu feeling when a question of principle was involved, for the Muslim dereliction of duty there was always a very soft corner in his heart. . . . I could not, for the life of me, understand

the ethics of depriving our own poor millions of the means of covering their nudity, and sending the selfsame clothes to a distant land.⁶⁶

Nevertheless, despite these disagreements, the Swami still believed that the hour of India had come with Gandhi's movement, and he kept putting a lot of energy into it. In early 1922 he wrote a letter to Bombay papers:

Disagreeing as I do with Mahatma Gandhi in several details of non-violent non-cooperation, and strongly deprecating his tenacity in giving authoritative expression to his personal views. I have still worked with him because it is his movement alone in which lies, in my opinion, the salvation of our Motherland at the present moment.⁶⁷

At that time he was working hard preparing Delhi for satyagraha, but he met with continuous obstruction on the part of Dr Ansari and the local Congress Committee. 'But the army of Congress volunteers never came out, and on the day fixed for getting my blessing for the disciplined National Army, Mr Abbas Hussain Quarry came with the Bardoli resolution and everything was over.'⁶⁸ Gandhi had written his ultimatum to the Viceroy, and the Swami, discouraged, wrote to the Mahatma:

If there is no complete preparation for Satyagraha in Bardoli, I do not understand why so much hurry about it. Compared to that Delhi is not the least prepared for mass civil disobedience. There is no work here for opposing the repressive policy of the Government. . . . And as for mass civil disobedience, in which the principal item is the readiness for non-payment of taxes, Delhi is neither ready nor has the Congress succeeded in removing disgust towards the untouchables. For these reasons I shall leave Delhi either on 15th or 16th of February, 1922, and retire for writing a history of the Arya Samaj.⁶⁹

Then came the Chauri-Chaura tragedy, the Bardoli Working Committee resolution, and the stormy A.I.C.C. meeting in Delhi on 24-5 February. At this meeting the Swami made a last stand, proposing the following amendments:

The All-India Congress Committee further rules that the Congress shall not be responsible for any violence committed by persons outside the Congress organization and in case of any individual member of the Congress being guilty of violence he shall be expelled from the Congress committees and bodies. If the above amendment is rejected I move that all civil disobedience whether individual or mass, be abandoned for the future.⁷⁰

Gandhi tried everything to make the Swami withdraw his amendments. But at first Shraddhananda was adamant. 'Mahatma!

You alone have not the monopoly of conscience. I, too, have a conscience and if by acting according to its dictates I am reduced to a minority of one, I shall only be following you in standing to my guns.⁷¹ But once again Gandhi finally succeeded in his plea, and the Swami promised to withdraw the amendment in open session, saying at the same time that he would have nothing more to do with Congress work. Accordingly he sent in his resignation on 12 March 1922.

I believe that time will never come when a non-violent calm atmosphere, according to the high ideals propounded by Mahatma Gandhi, could be produced among the Indian masses and therefore to agree to the proposition that Civil Disobedience of laws could be started at all in the near future, would for me, be acting against my conscience.⁷²

Although the Swami was prevailed upon to continue as a member, this was the effective end of his role in Congress.

A couple of constant themes run through these criticisms of Gandhian methods by the Swami. One is his repeated stress on the fear of violence, and on the fact that the people were not sufficiently prepared for non-violent agitation. The other is the accent on the need for a constructive side to the movement. These two themes are of special interest because they are so much part of the Satyagraha theory as expounded by the Mahatma himself: non-violence and constructive action were always stressed by him in all his writings on the subject. Yet, in the practical organization of mass movements they seem to have been lost sight of.

Apart from disagreement with the Mahatma's campaign methods, there was another aspect of his actions that became increasingly irritating to the Swami, as to many others: Gandhi's growing dictatorial attitude. Whereas in *Shradhdhā* of 7 May 1920 the Swami applauded the Mahatma's appointment as President of the Home Rule League, he also warned him not to act as a despot, because 'to bow one's head before the majority is the duty of every leader', and not to issue any proclamation without the agreement of the organization. The Swami tried in vain to dissuade Gandhi from going to see Lord Reading without first consulting the Working Committee of Congress, and wrote indignantly about the Mahatma's 'dictatorial actions' at the Bezvada A.I.C.C. meeting of March 1921. At the time of the June 1921 A.I.C.C. meeting at Lucknow, the Swami's comments acquired a touch of sarcasm:

Although at the present moment, while the illiterate masses consider Gandhi to be an incarnation of God, the educated people have taken him to be the Congress personified, yet the individual who has infused new spiritual life in the country and promises to obtain for you Swarajya within 12 months, ought to be given full opportunity to put forth his whole strength. If Swarajya does not become a *fait accompli* on 31st December 1921, then the *Avatar* theory will, of itself, be refuted . . .⁷³

On the arrival of the Prince of Wales in Bombay on 17 November 1921 a riot broke out, and Gandhi immediately issued a public statement blaming the non-cooperators, without consulting the Congress Working Committee. The Swami was very incensed, especially as this occurrence reminded him of a similar action of Gandhi's two years earlier at the time of the Delhi disturbances:

People felt that Mahatmaji had more regard for his own reputation for truth and spirit of non-violence than for doing justice to thousands of his followers who were ready to sacrifice and had actually sacrificed their all at the altar of hero-worship.⁷⁴

Gandhi reached his full dictatorial status at the December 1921 Congress: 'Mahatma Gandhi was named the first Dictator on emergency arising, with powers to name his successor . . .', recorded the Swami, and when the dictator sent his ultimatum to the Government of India regarding the inauguration of Mass Civil Disobedience in Bardoli, the Swami could take no more, and resigned.⁷⁵

The Untouchables

The third issue over which Shraddhananda clashed with Gandhi and the Congress was the cause of the untouchables. Already in early 1919, after his arrival to settle in Delhi, the Swami's attention was drawn to the untouchable question by claims that Christian Chamars who had accepted *shuddhi* and joined the Arya Samaj were being harassed by the police in the environs of Delhi. In April he published a booklet of eighty pages entitled *Jāti ke dīnon ko mat tyāgo*, 'Do not abandon the poor of our nation'.⁷⁶ It was a bitter and muddled work of hasty composition. The first seventy pages dealt with the methods used by Christian missionaries in India. Nearly half of the book was taken up by translations from an article in the *Theosophist* about the nefarious activities of Portuguese missionaries and the Inquisition, followed by an indictment of Protestant missionary work, in particular that of the Delhi

Cambridge Mission. Thus nearly ninety per cent of the pamphlet was aimed at demonstrating that missionaries had always used unfair, immoral, and underhand means. The last ten pages try to make a constructive point. Since the untouchables were becoming Christians for other than religious reasons, the way to prevent that happening was by educating their children, by protecting them from the police, and by helping them to achieve social uplift. Since the orthodox would not take up that task, it had become a duty of the Arya Samaj. In his usual fashion the Swami launched an appeal for a fund of many thousands. He declared the duty of the Aryas to be a crucial one because the greatest danger of the conversion of the untouchables to Christianity was that they became denationalized and supporters of the Raj. The Swami wrote, 'If the seven crores of untouchables of India, exasperated by the attitude of the twice-born, become Christians, then our orthodox leaders, supporters of independence, will not be able to do anything, except be very sorry.'⁷⁷

At the end of 1919, in his address to the Congress at Amritsar, the Swami harangued the audience about the untouchable problem, and from early 1920 onwards he repeatedly wrote on the subject in his *Shradhā*. He often stressed that the uplift of the untouchables was 'of the utmost importance not only from the point of view of social reform, but also from the point of view of politics'.⁷⁸ His proposed three-point programme prepared for the special Calcutta Congress of September 1920 included a special section on the untouchables, but Congress and Gandhi declared consideration of this inopportune.⁷⁹ In Delhi the Arya Samaj had been working for the depressed classes, and the Swami tried to get the local Congress to allow them access to the wells. But it was in vain. He wrote about it to Gandhi in September 1921, and added:

At Nagpur you laid down that one of the conditions for obtaining Swarajya within 12 months was to give their rights to the depressed classes and without waiting for the accomplishment of their uplift you have decreed that if there is a complete boycott of foreign cloth up till 30th September, Swarajya will be an accomplished fact on the 1st of October. The extension of the use of Swadeshi cloth is absolutely necessary but as long as 6½ crores of our suppressed classes are taking refuge with the British bureaucracy so long will the extension of Swadeshi be impossible.⁸⁰

The Swami went to the Lucknow A.I.C.C. meeting of June 1922 especially to push a plan of action for the removal of untouchability

His proposal to appoint a sub-committee on untouchability was accepted, but some parts of it were amended. The sum of two lakhs of rupees was first substituted for the original five lakhs proposed, and then even that was watered down by substituting the phrase 'as much as could be spared'. But misunderstandings kept cropping up. The Swami was appointed convenor of the sub-committee orally, but when he started preparatory work and asked for some money, he was informed that the Working Committee had appointed another convenor, and that no money would be forthcoming until a report had been received from the sub-committee. It was all a sorry mess, letters came and went, nothing was being done, and the Swami resigned in disgust. His postscript to the whole story reads as follows.

The Sub-Committee did no business and in placing the annual report of the Congress before its session at Gaya, the Secretary simply remarked that no work could be done by the Sub-Committee as no substitute for Swami Shradhananda could be found!⁸¹

The Muslim question

The second major development in the Swami's attitudes during 1920-22 was the switch from Khilafatist pro-Muslim agitation to definite distrust of Muslim actions and intentions. In early 1920 the Swami was part of the Khilafat deputation to the Viceroy,⁸² and he described his position on the Khilafat question as follows in his *Shradhā*. He supported the movement for two reasons. Firstly because it involved a universal principle of religious freedom, and secondly because it exposed a treacherous breach of promise by the British Government. His wholehearted support did not prevent him from criticizing the proposal of *hijrat* mooted by some Muslims: 'To run away is the work of cowards. We will remain right here, we will live here, and we will surrender our very life in the service of our mother in this holy land of ours.'⁸³ At the end of that year the Swami was still quite enthusiastic about Hindu-Muslim friendship and cooperation, and he urged the Arya Samaj preachers to realize that the time of aggressive criticism of Islam had gone, and that a new era had arrived:

when the Khilafat Committee itself is advocating the end of cowslaughter; when the Muslim divines are decreeing that both groups should act according to their respective faiths without hesitation and that no one's heart be sad-

dened; when Muslims are becoming one single voice with their Hindu brothers in giving the cow the title of mother, and have joined in the vehement opposition to the abattoir of Ratona and have notified the Government to withdraw its orders; when Maulanas Shaukat Ali and Mahommed Ali not only give up meat-eating but become involved with the Hindus in cow-protection. .⁸⁴

But from the end of 1920 reasons for irritation and suspicion started surfacing. At the time of the special Calcutta Congress session and at the Nagpur session, the Swami was disturbed by the way Shaukat Ali suggested that Gandhiji's non-violence was but a façade hiding his revolutionary intentions, and by the references to 'the killing of Kafirs' in the *Koran* verses recited by the Maulanas at the Nagpur Khilafat Conference.⁸⁵ Mohammad Ali's telegram to the Sultan of Kabul was deemed a very unwise move by the Swami,⁸⁶ and Shaukat Ali's proposal at the Karachi Khilafat Conference of October 1921 for the establishment of a republic disturbed him greatly. He wrote to Gandhi that 'among both communities there was a fall in their mutual trust'⁸⁷

Other minor matters also irritated the Swami. He mentioned in a letter to Gandhi that the Muslim Congressmen of Delhi would not agree to let the depressed classes draw water from the wells, even after he had induced the Hindus to allow it.⁸⁸ In October 1921 the Swami was very incensed, as mentioned before, over the fact that Gandhi on the one hand refused to approve his proposal to distribute the surrendered foreign cloth to the poor of India, and on the other hand consented to let the Muslims send that cloth to Turkey.⁸⁹

At this time the Moplah rebellion was hitting the headlines and the question of the forced conversion of Hindus by the rebel Muslims was being hotly debated.⁹⁰ The Congress was in a very awkward position: how could it condemn the Moplahs, heroic fighters for independence, at this time when Hindu-Muslim collaboration was foremost on its programme? At the Ahmedabad session this question was vigorously discussed, and the result was that only a very mildly-worded condemnation of the Moplah excesses was allowed to pass.⁹¹ The Swami wrote in his paper, 'This is the first warning that the attitude of the Muslims is undergoing a change',⁹² but he made his opinion much clearer in a letter to his son Indra at the conclusion of the Congress session:

With this letter I am sending you the appeal of the Muslim leaders. Read

it carefully. In the sitting of the Subject Committee at Ahmedabad mention was made that Gandhi would not have the right to interfere in religious matters of the Muslims. At that time I asked why Hindus, Sikhs and others were not mentioned. From the appeal I am enclosing it appears that the Muslims only want to make India and the Hindus a mere means of strengthening their own cause. For them Islam comes first and Mother India second. Should not the Hindus work at their own *sangathan* [consolidation]? The ordinary Hindus are separated from one another. Therefore, if any *sangathan* were possible, it could only come through the Arya Samaj. But there too all has been reduced to ashes by the fire of hostility. Yet, if some *sangathan* can arise apart from the Arya Samaj, then something can perhaps be achieved. I am going to the Gurukul to think about that . . .⁹³

In Delhi, in early 1922 the Swami's relations with Dr Ansari, who was President of the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee, became strained. When the Swami wanted to start collecting funds for the Delhi martyrs' memorial, he was told that he would have to postpone it till the Muslims had collected one lakh of rupees for their Angora fund. Whenever he proposed the inauguration of satyagraha in Delhi, Ansari found new excuses. There were other minor points of friction, but Shradddhananda was more upset by his suspicion that all along Ansari was in touch with the British authorities in Delhi.⁹⁴

In August 1922 the Swami summarized his new attitude to Hindu-Muslim collaboration in a press statement;

. . . outwardly there was no friction but he had noticed in all the provinces that in their hearts the Hindu and Muhammadan communities have become suspicious of each other. One reason appears to be that while the Muhammadans and Sikhs were organized among themselves, the Hindus, as a body, were disorganized. The remedy to his mind lay in Hindu leaders organizing their own community and the Muhammadan leaders laying more stress on the attainment of Swaraj than purely on Khilafat.⁹⁵

Thus we find that by the latter part of 1922 the Swami had become alienated from Gandhi and from the Congress, very doubtful and suspicious about the intentions and tactics of the Muslims, and increasingly worried about the lack of unity among the Hindus. Although for three years he had had constant disagreements with Gandhi, the wily Mahatma had always succeeded in reconciling the Swami and rallying him to the cause. The reason is that the Swami found it impossible to stand aside as long as he felt that Gandhi's campaign was the epic battle, the great historic cause of the moment. But when after Bardoli and Chauri-Chaura

the movement collapsed, so did the spirit of the Swami. The same was true of the cause of Khilafat and Hindu-Muslim unity. Here too, the Swami was able to swallow a lot, but the fact that the driving spirit had gone out of the movement made him break with it.

In jail at last

Between 1919 and 1922 the Swami had at eight different times expected he might be arrested and put into jail.⁹⁶ The authorities had seriously considered it a couple of times, but had always reluctantly avoided taking that step because of the Swami's popularity. When the arrest finally occurred, it was quite unexpected. In August 1922 trouble erupted in Amritsar over the ownership of a plot of land attached to the Gurdwara at Guru-ka-Bagh. The Sikhs considered it as part of their sacred property and continued to cut wood from it. This led to police interference, charges, convictions, and imprisonment. The Akali Sikhs organized a passive resistance campaign: groups of Sikhs would go openly to Guru-ka-Bagh, and into the land guarded by the police. They were systematically stopped, mercilessly beaten, and arrested. On 28 August the Akali leaders issued an appeal to Indians of all communities to come and witness an example of this 'We expect of you nothing more than to come and watch the ideally non-violent, spiritual struggle.'⁹⁷

Shraddhananda responded immediately to that call and he arrived at Amritsar on 10 September in the company of Ajmal Khan and Pandit Pyarelal Sharma, Malaviya was there already. The Swami went to Guru-ka-Bagh, where he addressed the group of Akali non-violent volunteers about to move towards the land, and the assembled crowd. He told them that the people of Delhi, Muslims, Hindus, and even Christians were behind them, and that a telegram from the Akali Committee was sufficient to bring them to join the struggle. He blessed the satyagrahis and wished 'that they should in that religious struggle (Dharma Yuddh) proceed to victory with the same non-violent spirit [as before]'.⁹⁸ When the Swami was about to leave, he was arrested and brought to Amritsar Jail.

There he joined most of the leaders of the Satyagraha, the members of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, in a

small jail overflowing with political detainees. Conditions were far from satisfactory, and the old and sick Swami tried his best to make representations to the jail authorities for some improvement, but with little success. The Swami's case came before the court on 22 September. He made a statement to the court, clearing up some details in witnesses' testimonies. But he stressed

... that he had not made the statement with any idea of a defence in Court. He had done so only in order that the public might become in full possession of the real facts. Otherwise, the present bureaucratic Government was at this moment an irresponsible, selfish, unjust and tyrannical system of Government and even gods under the influence of the system had to kill their conscience. Therefore he considered it a sin to produce a defence before such a Government and the courts constituted by it.⁹⁹

On 7 October the judge handed down his sentence: one year's simple imprisonment under section 117, and four months under section 143, to be served concurrently.

On 26 October the Swami was transferred to Mianvali jail, where there was more space, more freedom, and a gentler regime. He became part of the family of forty-odd political prisoners, among whom there were some personal friends. He soon established his order of the day. He rose at two, spent some time in meditation, then he had a bath, did his laundry and cleaning-up, and some physical exercises. Then he did some reading from the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Upanishads*, performed his *Sandhyā* ritual, gave some explanation of a text to those present, and had a stroll with his friends. At nine o'clock he had some breakfast, and conversation, at ten o'clock he drank some milk and rested. At midday he ate some fruit, and studied till two o'clock when he gave a discourse on the *Gītā* or the *Upanishads*, after which the time was spent in conversation and discussions. At 6.30 he did some writing, and after a short walk and an evening prayer he went to bed at nine.¹⁰⁰

The Swami described his life in jail in great detail in his *Bandh Ghar ke Vichitra Anubhav*, 'Strange experiences in jail'. The minutiae of food and of toilet provisions are painstakingly recounted, as is the lengthy description of a quarrel among the inmates about the eating or not-eating of ghee. Nothing much is memorable in this pamphlet, which ends with an indictment of the prison system, at least as applied to non-political detainees, under the title 'The Jail manual is only for show'.¹⁰¹

Unexpectedly the Swami was released from Mianvali jail on

26 December 1922, and, after short stops in Amritsar and Jullundur, he arrived back in Delhi on 29 December. The jail period was a fitting ending to his political career. He had over a period of three years participated at the highest level of leadership in a movement that made the British Empire shake: 'The 1920-21 period was probably the worst moment for Britain's imperial rulers in India in the ninety years between the Mutiny and 1942.'¹⁰² Notwithstanding recurring misgivings and disagreements, Shradhdhananda had kept fighting in Congress alongside Gandhi. But 1922 brought nothing but disappointments, and when the Swami came out of jail at the end of that year, the hectic movement that shook the British lay in ruins, and the Hindu-Muslim unity of the Khilafat days had broken up. The Swami was now 67 years old. Although his health had been very poor for a long time, the rest and self-discipline of jail-life had considerably restored him. But there was no denying it, he was an old man now, frail, and disenchanted. Yet another great cause had taken a lot out of him, had finally disappointed him, and left him with a feeling of emptiness.

CHAPTER VI

The Untouchables: 'Save the dying Race', 1923-26

'Yet it is a source of contentment to me that I am singled out as the one worthy of wearing the crown of martyrdom'¹

His period in jail had given the Swami plenty of time to think about his life and his future aims, and about his past involvement in politics. He wrote of the decision he arrived at as follows:

I have come to the conclusion that nowadays strength of moral character is a very rare thing. I am at least cast in such a mould that, although I experience within myself in some parts a lack of goodness, I am unable to collaborate with people without moral fibre. There are very great men available to direct the Congress, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Khalafat movement, and other all-India organizations. For a man like me, who has but little power, the big task is this to try to put before the Aryan nation the message of the revival of *brahmacharya*, and of the way I have discovered for assuring the uplift of the suppressed castes.²

Shortly after his release from jail, he made his views on the political situation clear in an interview with the *Leader*. He was grieved about divisions and apathy in Congress, and reiterated his opposition to ineffective individual civil disobedience. He felt that there were only two choices available to Congress. It could launch mass civil disobedience, which should not be stopped on account of violence committed by non-Congress people; if Congressmen were guilty of violence they should be expelled from the organization. The alternative was to inaugurate a constructive programme. The accent should be on Swadeshi and the removal of untouchability, and council entry should be universal and positive to be effective. He stressed that 'India's untouchables are the anchor sheets of the British Government and the removal of untouchability is, in my opinion, the question of questions at the present time'³ He resigned from the Sadhu-Mahamandal because it was not prepared to work for that cause.⁴ Shradhdhananda's son Indra, who was back in

Delhi, joined the Swarajya party,⁵ and Motilal Nehru tried to convince the Swami to do the same.⁶ But he refused to be moved, and stayed aloof from political involvement.

Shuddhi of the Malkanas

The Arya Samaj was deeply stirred when Ramachandra, a preacher who was working for the uplift of the low castes in Jammu, died on 20 January 1923 as a result of a severe beating he had received from a mob of Rajputs resenting his work.⁷ At the next meeting of the Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, which was called to plan the celebrations of the coming Dayananda birth centenary, it was decided to found a Dayanand Dalitoddhar Mandal, and to collect money to finance that work. Shradhdhananda was appointed President, and he sent the following statement to the papers

Noticing even the Congress powerless to absorb the so-called untouchables, I have made it the sole mission of my remaining life. I appeal to all Hindu Aryans, irrespective of religious or political differences, who do not like their six crores brethren to be cut away from their community, to help me with money and men.⁸

It was, however, the case of the Malkana Rajputs that propelled the Swami into a new kind of leadership and brought his name back into the headlines. The Malkana Rajputs, scattered among many villages between Mathura and Farrukhabad, were nominally Muslims, but their actual cultural and ritual customs were a strange mixture of Muslim and Hindu practices. Moreover, the mixture was itself varied: although many were practically completely Hindu, there were groups in which the Muslim aspect predominated.⁹ From early in the century moves had been made by some Hindus to try to restore the relations between the Malkanas and the Hindu Rajputs. These attempts were resumed with greater vigour in the twenties. Between August and December 1922 the Rajput organization called the Kshatriya Upkarini Sabha held three meetings, and at the last of these it was agreed that after a purification ceremony the Malkanas could become reunited with the Hindu Rajputs.¹⁰

The next meeting of that body on 13 February 1923 at Agra was decisive. The Swami was invited, and the gathering this time was much wider, consisting of 'about eighty persons from Arya,

Sanatanist Hindu, Sikh and Jain background'.¹¹ Under the Swami's lead things started moving right away. A Bharatiya Hindu Shuddhi Sabha was established, of which the Swami became President and head of the managing committee, and Lala Hanraj a Vice-President. The committee was inclined to proceed cautiously, but the Swami argued for urgency: since Muslims were already at work among the Malkanas, a public appeal for funds and helpers should be published without delay.¹² Ten days later the famous appeal appeared in the papers under the heading 'Save the dying race'.

The great Arya nation is said at the present moment to be a dying race, not only because its numbers are dwindling but because it is completely disorganised. Individually man to man accord to no nation on the earth in intellect and physique, possessing a code of morality unapproachable by any other race of humanity, it is still helpless on account of its divisions and selfishness. Lakhs upon lakhs of the best in the race have been obliged to profess Mahomedanism and thousands have been enticed away to accept Christianity without the least effort on the part of their brethren to retain or reclaim them. Some of the neo-Muslim Brahmans, Vanhyas, Rajputs and Jats have for more than two centuries and more been casting yearning glances and kept their Hindu faith and prejudices intact in the hope of being taken back in the bosom of their old brotherhood.

A mere chance opened Hindu eyes. The Rajput Mahasabha announced with a flourish of trumpets that four and a half lakh Muslim Rajputs were ready for becoming Hindus. After having made this misleading announcement the Rajput Mahasabha went to sleep. I call the announcement misleading because an overwhelming majority of them had never become Mahomedans in faith and practice. The Hindus went to sleep, but the Mahomedans being a living force were roused to action and scores of their preachers are at work for whom maintenance and propaganda work money is flowing like water. Thus after all roused the Hindu community also and there is now a cry from all sides for absorbing our strayed brethren in the bosom of the Vedic church. A new Sabha has been organized under the name of the Bharatiya Hindu Shuddhi Sabha with the object of reclaiming those who are willing to come back to its fold.¹³

Characteristically, the Swami threw himself wholeheartedly into the work. On Sunday 25 February he was present at the first ceremony of reclamation of Malkanas to Hinduism at the village of Raibna, near Agra, and he spent the next two months in the field, going from village to village. In those two months about a hundred villages were covered. Within the first month five thousand Malkanas were reclaimed, and by the end of the year the total had risen to about thirty thousand. Shraddhananda and his Arya collaborators were the acknowledged leaders of this initial push.

and they naturally became the main target of Muslim agitation against *shuddhi*.¹⁴

A public meeting of the Muslims of Bombay held on 18 March 1923 under the auspices of the Jamiat-ul-Ulama condemned 'Swami Shradhdhananda's high-handed efforts in coercing the Mussulmans of the districts of Muttra, Agra, etc.'¹⁵ Sensational posters appeared in many cities, and rumours spread that Muslims in the dress of Hindu *shuddhis* were going about frightening the Malkanas and heaping insults on the Swami. Some Aryas were afraid of an attack on their leader, and proposed to arrange a bodyguard for the threatened Swami. But he refused with the words, 'Param Pita [the Father on high] is my protection'. The area was in turmoil, caught up in the contention between Hindu and Muslim preachers. In Moradabad the Swami was barred from making public speeches, and in many other places his addresses were answered by Muslim counter-meetings.¹⁶

As the echoes of the movement constantly hit the headlines, and as one of the main arguments of the Muslims against the Hindu agitation was that it endangered Hindu-Muslim unity, politicians became concerned. They visited the area and made statements to the papers. Rajagopalachari set the general tone in his statement in *Young India*. After acknowledging the absolute right of anybody to conversion, he continued that:

. . . national welfare must affect our decision in regard to time and situation when we deal not with the substance but the form of religious observances of large bodies of people. If Swami Shradhdhanandji's claim in regard to the Malkana people is right as it very probably is, that it is not conversion, but merely reclamation of people who already follow practices of Hinduism, there is greater reason for the application of the principle of national expediency.¹⁷

He therefore ended his communication with the plea, 'I could therefore earnestly submit to the indefatigable Swamiji, "not now"'. Motilal Nehru's statement of 8 April took the same line, 'I would have been glad if the movement had not been started at this juncture when feelings are strained between Hindus and Musalmans in the Punjab'.¹⁸ When the Congress deputation, which included Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Devi Sarojini, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, pointed out that individuals had been harassed by *shuddhi* workers, the Swami very firmly denied their

allegations.¹⁹ Jawaharlal Nehru too approved of the principle that *shuddhi* was anybody's right, but he was of the opinion 'that it would have been better for this question not to have been taken up then', and he expressed the wish that 'all outsiders left the Malkanas in peace for a while and permitted them to work along their own lines'²⁰

By this time a very important development had taken place in the *shuddhi* movement: the increasing approval and involvement of orthodox Hindu leaders. On 31 March, about a month after the beginning of the Malkana campaign, the Maharaja of Darbhanga and learned pandits of Banaras, speaking in the name of the orthodox Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, gave their approval to the reclamation of the Malkana Rajputs.²¹ The *Leader* of 6 April applauded that action in an editorial comment, and added that the orthodox pandits of the Punjab had also expressed their approval, and that many other orthodox bodies had joined in, such as the Maharashtra Dharma Parishad, the Sadhu Mahasabha, the Gujar Mahasabha, the Jat Mahasabha, and the Rajput Bhatri Sammelan. On 4 and 5 April, public meetings on the Malkana situation were held in Banaras. They were heavily attended by the orthodox, and resulted in six orthodox pandits volunteering to work among the Malkanas. The movement grew as more Hindu bodies, such as the Hindu Gujar Conference and the Rajput Conference, passed resolutions supporting the movement.²²

In May, a group of orthodox formed their own separate organization for reclamation work among the Malkanas, calling it the Hindu Punjab Samskar Samiti. Its headquarters were in Agra, and its President was the eminent Swami Dayananda of the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal. They had their own offices, preachers, and funds. One of the reasons for this initiative was that the Shuddhi Sabha was dominated by Aryas' collaboration between some of the purest orthodox pandits and some of the more ardent Aryas had proved very difficult.²³

Hindu Sangathan and the Mahasabha

In fact, from the very beginning, the Swami conceived the *shuddhi* movement as but an essential part of a broader movement for Hindu solidarity, or Hindu *sangathan*.²⁴ The question arises why the Swami did not get involved earlier in that movement. It was a

meeting with Colonel U. Mukherji in Calcutta in early 1912 that brought to his attention the problem of the slow but steady decrease in numbers of the Hindu population. The Colonel had calculated from the statistical tables of the Census Reports that 'within the next 420 years the Indo-Aryan race would be wiped off the face of the earth unless steps were taken to save it'. This problem did not, however, at that time become an urgent cause for Munshiram, as he wrote, 'For full thirteen years after that I remained a mere student of statistics'.²⁵

Four years earlier the movement had started in the Panjab by the formation of Hindu Sabhas, and in 1909 they held their first combined session in Lahore. After some frustrations, the leaders finally succeeded in February 1915, at successive meetings in Haridwar, Lucknow, and Delhi, to establish an All-India Hindu Sabha.²⁶ Munshiram was invited to participate, but declined, as did Gandhi who was visiting the Gurukul at that time.

There are several reasons why Munshiram remained aloof from the movement. First of all, between 1907 and 1912 he was strenuously engaged in defending the Arya Samaj against accusations of disloyalty and sedition. Secondly, although he criticized the Congress, he was deeply convinced that 'nobody could work so well as the Congress for political objects'. He resented the Hindu Sabhas discussing religious topics, and he felt that their aspiration to political work was an exercise in 'futility'.²⁷ Moreover, he had strong reservations about the leadership of the movement: the Aryas involved mostly belonged to the D.A.V. section, and the politicians attracted to it were only second-rate, whereas the important leaders like Malaviya stayed aloof.²⁸ Finally, Munshiram intensely disliked the exceedingly loyal, pro-British stand taken by the movement, 'run by those Hindus in whose estimation every invader who snatched the Government of a country from its people was God personified'.²⁹

In an editorial of 2 April 1923 the *Leader* took up the idea of Hindu *sangathan*, and expressed the hope that the proposed All-India Hindu Sabha to be held at Banaras would become 'a symbol of the united strength of the Hindus'. The Swami grasped the opportunity and took up the task of preparing the ground for the Banaras meeting by a tour 'for Hindu *Sangathan*'. He appointed Swami Swatantrananda and a committee to carry on the leadership of the *shuddhi* campaign, and on 7 June he set out for the Panjab.

After ten days he had to come back to Delhi as his failing health required some rest. But by 13 July he was back on the road, this time touring the U.P. He worked in close collaboration with Pandit Malaviya, as an emissary of the Mahasabha propagating the idea of *sangathan*, 'to organize Hindus as a community for their improvement generally, with a special view to their social and religious affairs'.³⁰

The *Leader* ran editorials on two consecutive days, 17 and 18 August, in which it tried to carefully delineate the task and object of the coming Mahasabha meeting at Banaras. The paper, enumerated the objectives as follows:

1. To promote greater union and solidarity among all sections of the Hindu community and to unite them more closely as parts of one organic whole.
2. To promote good feelings between Hindus and other communities in India and to act in a friendly way with them with a view to evolve a united and self-governing Indian nation.
3. To ameliorate and improve the conditions of all classes of the Hindu community including the low castes.
4. To protect and promote Hindu interests whenever and wherever it may be necessary.
5. Generally to take steps for promoting religious, moral, educational, social and political interests of the community.

It was argued that 'the citadels of orthodoxy and social and religious tyranny could best be assailed through an All-Indian Hindu organization', and also that 'a vyavastha [decree] from a number of sanatanist Pandits of recognized eminence in favour of the removal of untouchability would be more efficacious than any number of resolutions passed on the subject by the Congress or any other purely political organization'. It strongly pleaded for the uplift of untouchables, as this was of 'the utmost pressing communal, national and humanitarian urgency', and therefore, the paper said, 'no prejudice ought to be allowed to hamper work in this direction'.³¹

These were strong words, but at the same time the *Leader* was careful not to antagonize orthodoxy by descending into hard details. Swami Shradhdhananda, in his usual fashion, had no such prudent inhibitions, and he announced that he had sent a number of resolutions to be moved at the Banaras meeting:

1. With a view to do justice to the so-called depressed classes in the Hindu

community and to assimilate them, as part of an organic whole in the great body of the Aryan fraternity, this conference of Hindus of all sects holds-

- a) that the lowest among the depressed classes be allowed to draw water from common public wells.
- b) that water be served to them at drinking posts freely as is done to the highest among other Hindus.
- c) that all members of the classes be allowed to sit on the same carpet in public meetings and other ceremonies with the higher classes and
- d) that their children (male and female) be allowed to enter freely and, at teaching time, to sit in the same form with other Hindu and non-Hindu children in government, national and denominational institutions.³²

The second resolution proposed that all 'Neo-Muslims be taken back and treated as Hindus', and the third resolution went a good deal further than even that:

3. In view of the fact that an overwhelming majority of Indian Mahomedans and Christians are the descendants of Hindu converts and in view of the catholicity of the ancient Vedic Dharma which absorbed non-Aryans into the community—this conference resolves that non-Hindus converted by any sect of the Hindus according to the purification [prayashchit] rite prescribed by the representative body of that sect be considered Hindus to all intents and purposes by the whole Hindu community.³³

These resolutions were obviously much too concrete and too far-reaching to have any chance of being accepted by the orthodox wing. The discussions in the subject committee of the Banaras Hindu Mahasabha meeting lasted a long time, but did succeed in arriving at a compromise acceptable to both Aryas and the orthodox. The resolution on the Malkanas declared:

that the Malkana Rajputs who were called neo-Muslims but were following the chief practices of the Hindus and had not contracted marriage relations with other communities should be taken back into the Hindu fold in the castes to which they originally belonged, and expressed delight at the reclamation work already done.³⁴

But the far wider extension of *shuddhi* expressed in Shradhananda's third resolution was treated very cautiously. It was decided that a committee of men learned in the Hindu *Shāstras* be appointed to consider the matter and report its findings and decisions to the executive. The question of untouchability was handled with similar caution and referred to that same committee of pandits, 'to frame rules and regulations to secure for the members of the so-called untouchable classes access to public meetings, drinking wells, temples and public schools'.³⁵ Both these proposals were supported by the Swami in the open session.

The Swami, who was elected a Vice-President of the Mahasabha in the final sitting,³⁶ was naturally disappointed that the Banaras session did not go further.

It was my wish that the Past Hindu Mahasabha session had been even more completely successful. I would have been more pleased if the sin of untouchability had been washed away . . . and it was very painful and discouraging to me that our fallen brothers were not allowed to speak from the platform of the Mahasabha.³⁷

But in his public pronouncements he generally took a more positive attitude and stressed the considerable gains achieved in Banaras.³⁸

The Hindu-Muslim question

The year 1923 had brought a number of serious Hindu-Muslim riots to North India. After Multan and Amritsar early in the year, it was Calcutta's turn: music played by Aryas in front of a mosque led to riots lasting for several days.³⁹ In late August came the very violent Saharanpur disturbances, reports and counter-reports of which kept the bitterness alive for months.⁴⁰ The problem of the relations between the two communities, aggravated by the *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movements, were very much to the fore at the special meeting of Congress held in Delhi in September 1923. A few days before the Congress met, Hindu and Muslim leaders gathered for three days to discuss the current problem. A public meeting was held in the grounds of the Martyr Hall which had been erected out of public subscriptions to perpetuate the memory of both Hindus and Muslims killed in the March 1919 Delhi disturbances. Hakim Ajmal Khan of Deoband voted Shraddhananda to the chair. The location and the occasion seemed to augur well for the unity talks, and the reports said they were very cordial. The *Leader* even reported that, 'As for the Malkana reclamation, if the two parties agreed, they should withdraw outside agencies, leaving the Malkanas to their own community either to reclaim them or not'.⁴¹

The Swami wrote in detail about the proceedings. At the start of the conference, Maulana Ahmad Saud strongly attacked him, accusing him of creating dissension between Hindus and Muslims, and of even accepting money from the British for that 'service'. The Swami's reply in defence of *shuddhi* and *sangathan* lasted over two hours. He agreed that Hindu-Muslim unity was essential

for achieving India's freedom, but he denied that unity had become jeopardized by *shuddhi* and *sangathan*:

The Hindu-Muslim unity had already been weakened by the transgressions of Mian Fazi Husain and the Muslims of Multan. The work of the National Congress had also come to a stand-still after what happened at Bardoli. Muslim Maulvis and Hindu leaders are just using *shuddhi* and *sangathan* as an excuse.⁴²

The crucial question discussed at these meetings was that of the possible withdrawal of all outside workers from the Malkana area. The Swami made his own stand clear.

Even though the responsibility of the trouble around Agra lay on the Muslim Maulvis, I would, on my part, try to extract the acceptance of this proposal by the Bharatiya Hindu Shuddhi Sabha. If the Muslims agreed to this proposal and the Shuddhi Sabha refused to comply with it, then I would resign as President of that organization.⁴³

Some Muslim leaders responded by offering to recall their preachers too. Then the question of who should withdraw first was debated. A committee was set up to discuss that problem, but it failed to reach a conclusion; the Swami was adamant that the Muslims should leave first, as they had been the first to start.⁴⁴

The whole question was again discussed in the special Congress meeting that followed immediately, and the protagonists from both sides reiterated basically the same arguments, in a spirit of 'acute controversy'.⁴⁵ Some decisions were arrived at, but their real effectiveness was very doubtful. It was decided 'to establish a committee to monitor the *shuddhi* and *tabligh* activities, to recommend means to prevent unethical practices, and to complete a report on the subject prior to the annual meeting at the end of the year'.⁴⁶ It was also announced that a joint proclamation by Ulema and Pandits would be issued on the question.⁴⁷ This statement, signed by over sixty Hindu and Muslim leaders and Congressmen, duly appeared in the papers, declaring that he who commits 'any act of violence against or attacks the person, property or honour of women or places of worship of his neighbours. . . or helps those who indulge in such misdeeds, he is, from the religious point of view, guilty of a great sin.'⁴⁸

Shraddhananda's close involvement in these deliberations set some rumours flying. The *Leader* printed a statement by Ruchiram Sahni 'that all rumours and reports in the papers that Shuddhi and Sangathan have been abandoned [are] without foundation'.⁴⁹ The

Swami found it necessary to make his position clear in a statement of 28 September from Delhi 'Idle and sometimes mischievous rumours were set afloat that Pandit Malaviya and myself had agreed to stop the work of Shuddhi and Hindu Sangathan at the request of Congress leaders. Nothing of the kind was ever done.' They had explained and defended Hindu rights, removed misconceptions, and laid the blame where it belonged. *Shuddhi* work would be carried on 'honestly without any unfair practices on our part, as had been done till now'. As for the rumours about his resigning from the Shuddhi Sabha, he admitted that he had considered doing so in order to free himself for literary work as a tribute to Dayananda on the centenary of his birth. When pressure had been exerted on him by Arya and Sanatan Dharma leaders, however, he had finally decided to continue in this more urgent task, and to postpone his literary work.⁵⁰

During the conference something else happened that had a very strong impact on the Swami. The Urdu pamphlet *Dar Islam* by Khwaja Hasan Nizami came into his hands. He immediately wrote in answer a pamphlet, the title of which clearly expressed his violent reaction. 'The Hour of Danger: Hindus, be on your guard! The order has been given to attack and destroy the fortresses of your religion in the hidden dead of night'⁵¹ The Swami attempted to put the contents of Nizami's pamphlet before the Unity Conference, but he was prevented from doing so on the excuse that this was the writing of just one man, of which nobody took any notice. It may have been true that politicians took no notice of Nizami, but his stature and popularity among North Indian Muslims, and the influence of his writings cannot be gainsaid.⁵² The Swami found out that the pamphlet was in fact only the introduction to a larger volume called *Fatami Dawat-i-Islam*, which had been published as early as 1920, years before the *shuddhi* of the Malkanas started. In this the Swami saw proof that the Muslim reaction of the day was not merely against the *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movements, but rather was part of a sinister plot hatched years earlier.

In his pamphlet the Swami went on to show how Nizami in his own introduction referred to his consultations with many Muslim leaders, including the Aga Khan, and how all had agreed that the publication of his work should remain a carefully kept secret within the Muslim community. The single purpose of the pamphlet was to describe all the means, fair and foul, by which

Hindus could be induced to become Muslims. It said that the attack should strongly concentrate on the untouchables because, 'if all untouchable castes become Muslims then the Muslim party will become equal to that of the Hindus'.⁵³ The Swami felt that he had uncovered a giant conspiracy. His pamphlet consisted practically entirely of quotations from Nizami's work, showing how all Muslims should be involved in the fight for the spread of Islam; how *pirs*, fakirs, politicians, peasants, zamindars, hakims, etc., could be used and what their allotted tasks should be. It also stressed the need for secrecy and for an extensive spy network.

Another side of Nizami's tactics was put in a clear light in the Swami's account: the repeated attacks on the Arya Samaj and the Swami, who were portrayed as the main obstacles to Muslim propaganda. Nizami slyly suggested that 'something happened to the Swami in jail', when he was in the hands of the British, with the result that he who was earlier the great champion of Hindu-Muslim unity, had now taken up the task of creating Hindu-Muslim enmity.⁵⁴ The Arya Samaj was depicted as the great enemy, active in the reconversion of Muslims, and hoping to swell their own numbers. And now they were attempting to involve the orthodox in their campaigns. Nizami's aim in writing the book was 'to indicate the means to save ourselves from the current attacks of the Arya Samaj'. As the Swami read on, it became clear to him that the Muslim conspiracy was directed in the first instance against the Arya Samaj as the frontline of Hinduism, and at himself as its leader.⁵⁵

In the conclusion of his own booklet, the Swami suggested some ways in which the Muslim threat could be countered. The openness and ethics of his methods stood in strong contrast with Nizami's tactics. Hindus should be educated thoroughly in their own religion, a task begun by the Aryas but far beyond their means. The native rulers should give up their Muslim ways which tended to make Islam attractive to their subjects. Hindus should desist from participating in Muslim religious festivals, should stop venerating Muslim *pirs* and visiting Muslim shrines. The Hindu community should protect its weakest members—the children, and the widows so often driven to Islam by despair. Most of all, Hindus should exorcise the evil spirit of untouchability: 'as long as that injustice remains the Hindu people will remain an easy prey to those conspiracies'. He closed the work with an appeal to Muslim political leaders to

publicly dissociate themselves from the schemes of Nizami, and to denounce those who partook in them.⁵⁶

In view of that appeal, the Swami was very disappointed when Muslim leaders could not even manage a small gesture. He deeply regretted that even a man like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, 'one of the few personalities who have, leaving aside communal issues, put themselves into the political work', had to be prodded hard to bring himself to express sympathy for the Hindu sufferers of Saharanpur.⁵⁷ The statement of Mohammed Ali in his presidential address at the Coconada Congress of December 1923 seemed the last straw: his proposal to divide the so-called untouchables equally between Hindus and Muslims was utterly repugnant to the Swami.⁵⁸ Three of the works he wrote in the last three years of his life dealt with the Muslim conspiracy against the Hindus.

The Untouchables—Clash with Gandhi

In 1924 the Swami was at the crossroads again. It seemed as if he had lost his keen interest in the Mahasabha. Nothing much had happened since the famous Banaras session. A panel of pandits had been chosen to study the questions of *shuddhi* and untouchability, and seventy-five pandits were appointed to meet in Banaras on 24 January, and forward their conclusions to the Mahasabha.⁵⁹ The Swami did not participate in the Working Committee meeting of 19 December 1923 in Banaras, nor did he go to the special session at Allahabad in February 1924. The resolutions passed at this meeting clearly indicate the causes of the Swami's growing discontent. The resolution about the untouchables made some positive contribution by urging their having access to schools, temples, and public wells, but it had a sting in its final paragraph: 'that it was against the scriptures and the tradition to give the untouchables "yajyopavit", to teach them Vedas and to interdine with them, and the Mahasabha hoped that workers in the interest of unity would give up these items of social reform'. The Aryas present vigorously attacked this clause and managed to force a compromise which read as follows:

As the giving of 'Yajyopavit' to untouchables, interdining with them and teaching them Veda was opposed to the Scriptures according to a very large body of Hindus, i.e. the Sanataonists, these activities should not be carried on in the name of the Mahasabha.

The other contentious issue was *shuddhi*. The pandits' decision was that 'any non-Hindu was welcome to enter the fold of Hinduism, though he could not be taken into any caste'. Although some orthodox felt even that went too far, and the reformers thought that it was but an empty promise, the resolution was adopted unanimously.⁶⁰

These two resolutions were obviously quite contrary to the radical proposals of the Swami to the Banaras session of August 1923, and that was the basic reason for his withdrawal from close involvement in Mahasabha affairs. While the Mahasabha Allahabad session was sitting, he was in Western India, where he visited Gandhi in Yeravda jail. He was planning a tour of South India in connection with the untouchable problem. It is striking how none of his statements now mentioned the Mahasabha. Before leaving on this tour he clarified the new turn his thought was taking in the pamphlet *Vartamān Mukhya Samasyā*, 'Today's foremost problem'.⁶¹ In the foreword he set out the basic argument of the booklet:

The sin of untouchability among Hindus is a mark of shame on the forehead of the Hindu nation.

Whenever our political leaders raise the demand for self-government, their enemies point to the iniquities of untouchability in order to silence them. People who oppress a section of their own community, reducing them to slavery, do not have any right to complain about the oppressive measures of foreign rulers.

It is my humble opinion that as long as the oppression of our seven crores of brethren goes on, so long is it impossible for the National Congress to be successful in any kind of programme of criticism or development.

The pamphlet first surveyed the work of the Arya Samaj in the uplift of the untouchables and in the campaign of reclamation, and then recalled his own frustrated efforts to make Congress take some action. He sketched the progress of the *shuddhi* work among the Malkanas, and concluded that now that the work was running along with the support of the Mahasabha, he was himself directing his own efforts specifically toward the uplift of the untouchables.

He stressed that the specific reason for this was that a significant new threat had been coming from the Muslims. Khwaja Hasan Nizami's pamphlet, publication of which had been urged by the Aga Khan himself, had called for an all-out attempt to convert the untouchables to Islam, calling up the vision of a bright future

for the Muslims: 'If all untouchables became Muslims then these will become equal to the Hindus, and at the time of independence, they will not depend on the Hindus, but will be able to stand on their own legs' ⁴² After this pamphlet came the statement of Mohammed Ali at Cocanada about the untouchables and, to top it all, the prospect that the Aga Khan with his wealth and his sect was coming into the arena, 'which would make those Hindus who resisted becoming public Muslims into crypto half-Muslims' ⁴³

All this was seen by the Swami as revealing a vast Muslim conspiracy. Therefore, the protection and uplift of the untouchables now became 'the most pressing problem of the day', ⁴⁴ in both the political and the religious spheres. Congress could not be relied upon to do anything, the problem had to be solved by the Hindus. But their weakness was their divisiveness. The Swami appealed for a rallying point of unity. Whatever differences existed, all Hindus agreed on the issue of cow-protection. 'Every untouchable who becomes a Christian or a Muslim, becomes a beef-eater. Therefore, to save one single Hindu from the hands of non-Hindus, means to save in one year the life of one cow'. ⁴⁵ The Swami saw the situation as critical, requiring immediate action, but 'to make the indolent and scattered Hindu nation united for such an exceptional effort is not an easy task ; in such circumstances, where should we turn for help?' The Swami's answer to this question indicates where he will turn at the crossroads. 'On whom else falls the responsibility for the protection and uplift of the untouchables than on the followers of Dnyananda?' He appealed for two hundred and fifty preachers from among the Aryas, and for twenty-five lakhs of rupees to support the campaign, to be donated to the Dalitoddhar fund of the Sarvadehik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. ⁴⁶

Shradhdhananda set out on his first South Indian tour with the intention 'to study the untouchability question on the spot with a view to considering ways and means for its removal'. ⁴⁷ The Vaikom Satyagraha was in full swing at the time, and the Swami had been invited by George Joseph to take over the leadership when he went to jail. ⁴⁸ First the Swami went to see Mahatma Gandhi at Juhu to discuss not only the Vaikom agitation, but also the *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movements. The meeting lasted for over two hours, but no statement was released. The Mahatma let it be known that he would soon make a statement now that he

was in possession of the necessary first-hand information.⁶⁶ It took the form of a long article in the *Young India* issue of 29 May 1925, entitled 'Hindu-Muslim Tension. its cause and cure'.⁷⁰

In this article Gandhi surveyed the riots between Hindus and Muslims, their mutual accusations and distrust. Among many other things, he also wrote about Shradhdhananda and the Arya Samaj:

Swami Shradhdhanandji is also distrusted. His speeches, I know, are often irritating. But even he wants Hindu-Muslim Unity. Unfortunately, he believes in the possibility of bringing every Muslim into the Aryan fold, just as perhaps most Mussalmans think that every non-Muslim will some day become a convert to Islam. Shradhdhanandji is intrepid and brave. Single-handed he turned a wilderness into a magnificent boarding college on the banks of the sacred Ganges. He has faith in himself and his mission. But he is hasty and easily ruffled. He inherits the traditions of the Arya Samaj.⁷¹

Then followed a few remarks about Swami Dayananda, and an attack on his *Satyarth Prakāsh* in which, wrote Gandhi, 'he has tried to make narrow one of the most tolerant and liberal of the faiths on the face of the earth'. He continued.

Wherever you find Arya Samajists, there is life and energy. But, having the narrow outlook and a pugnacious habit, they either quarrel with people of other denominations or failing that, with one another. Shradhdhanandji has a fair share of that spirit. But, in spite of all these drawbacks, I do not regard him as past praying for. It is possible that this sketch of the Arya Samaj and the Swamiji will anger them. Needless to say, I mean no offence. I love the Samajists, for I have many co-workers from among them. And I learnt to love the Swamiji, even while I was in South Africa. And though I know him better now, I love him no less. It is my love that has spoken.⁷²

The Samajists did not see Gandhi's words as an expression of love, and they took enormous offense. Protest meetings were held across the country, letters of protest poured into the papers, and wires were sent to the Mahatma.⁷³ But he did not relent, or withdraw anything, or express regret about any of what he called his 'deliberate' accusations.⁷⁴ When the Swami was asked if he would reply to Gandhi's article, he said that

... he did not think any reply was needed from him. His own statement was Mahatma Gandhi's best refutation. It was full of contradictions, and itself explained the reason why he had fallen foul of the Arya Samaj. The Arya Samaj could not in any way be injured by his writings. If the Arya Samajists were true to themselves neither the attacks of Mahatma Gandhi nor of any other individual could put a stop to the activities of the Samaj.⁷⁵

While this controversy raged, the Swami was on his tour of South India from 27 April to 5 June, visiting Bangalore, Cochin, Mangalore, Calicut, and Madras.⁷⁶ The main theme of his lectures was untouchability. In Poona he pleaded with the Hindus 'to abolish immediately untouchability and raise the depressed classes to the status of Kshatriyas or protectors of the Hindu Religion'.⁷⁷ He presided at the Andhra Untouchables' Conference at Bangalore,⁷⁸ and went on to observe the Vaikom Satyagraha. He made it clear that he could not personally take part in the struggle 'as he was not a member of Congress'. He argued against Gandhi's directive that the struggle should be kept local, and suggested that a deputation be sent to the Mahatma to see if he could at least allow the committee to receive outside help. If the Congress gave up the struggle, he said, it should be continued independently. He offered help and money and even, in that case, to take up the struggle under the auspices of the Hindu Sabha.⁷⁹

Arya Samajists working in the area had converted some depressed class members. At first these were allowed to use the roads previously closed to them, but then the authorities, under orthodox pressure, announced that conversion to the Arya Samaj did not take the convert out of the depressed classes. The Swami and Pandit Rishi Ram issued a manifesto of protest: 'it means that a member of the depressed classes cannot have his social disabilities removed unless he forsakes the Hindu society and religion'. The manifesto invited the whole of Hindu society, and in particular Pandit Malaviya as head of the Mahasabha, to take action.⁸⁰

The Swami kept putting pressure on Gandhi and the Congress: 'I advise the Congress either to vote funds or leave the work [of untouchable uplift] to the Hindu Mahasabha and the Arya Samaj'.⁸¹ As he did not belong to Congress, he insisted, he would not interfere in its affairs, but this did not prevent him from continuing to criticize Gandhi's attitude to the Vaikom Satyagraha, his advice that the Akalis withdraw from Vaikom, and his advice to the Kathiawar Congress Conference not to hold its meeting unless the Dewan consented. Increasingly he identified himself with the work of the Arya missionaries working in the area for the reclamation of untouchables converted to Christianity.⁸²

It was while he was in Calcutta on his way back to Delhi that the Mahatma's article with its attack on the Arya Samaj was published. On 6 June, in Delhi, the Swami declared that 'the [Vaikom] cam-

paign would have been over had it not been for the intervention of Mr Gandhi'.⁸³ Later that month he sent the following wire to the Mahatma:

Kindly propose that every Hindu member of the All-India Congress Committee who can afford should engage at least one servant from among the untouchables for personal service, those not conforming to this rule to vacate office. If even this is impossible, then leave the question of the removal of untouchability for the Hindu Mahasabha.⁸⁴

But the wire he sent to Kelkar, Swaraj party chief whip, expressed very clearly how frustrated he had become with Gandhi's attitude:

Kindly ask your party not to allow Mahatmaji to shirk responsibility about restoring Hindu-Muslim unity and obtaining Swaraj after having raised the recent storm in all circles. His tirade against the Arya Samaj has set the Muslims at daily wild attacks on their devoted heads and if Muslim fanaticism breaks out at Bagrod, Mahatmaji will be responsible and he must not be allowed to wriggle out of his responsibility. Let your party put their case strongly before the committees, but refuse to vote on Mahatmaji's spinning resolution, leaving him in sole charge of responsibility in the Congress. My reading of the situation is that being unable to restore unity and enthusiasm for Congress work, Mahatmaji tries to lay responsibility on other heads who, if they fail will at the end be taunted by the No-Changers. Let Mahatmaji and his followers show what they can achieve within the next six months. If they fail the next Congress session will authoritatively decide what principles are to guide the Congress in future.⁸⁵

Obsessed with the Muslim threat

The Muslim threat began to loom larger and larger in the mind of the Swami. In the second half of 1924 he wrote his 'The Story of Hindu-Muslim unity',⁸⁶ which gave his interpretation of the historical background which led to the failure of the Delhi Unity Conference of September 1923. The friendly relations between the two communities which existed at first under British rule were changed as an aftermath of the Mutiny of 1857, when Syed Ahmed Khan took up the task of white-washing the Muslims as instigators of the Mutiny in the eyes of the British. He succeeded in convincing the British, who then turned against the Hindus as being the main culprits. Syed Ahmed Khan also fought for Urdu against Hindi, and succeeded in inducing Hindus to contribute to his Aligarh College. When Congress was founded, he did all he could to turn the Muslims away from it, and thus dominated the Muslims to the

end of the century, separating them from their Hindu brethren, which led in 1905 to the creation of the Muslim League. At the end of the First World War, the Khulafat and Rowlatt agitations brought a great deal of collaboration between the two communities. But then cracks started to appear, such as occurred as the aftermath of the Moplah rebellion. At the Delhi Unity Conference the Swami had tried to be as conciliatory as possible, but to no avail. The basic argument of the book was that the breakdown of Hindu-Muslim unity was not caused by the *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movements, but by the hostile attitude and crooked actions of the Muslims which were inaugurated by Syed Ahmed Khan, and were still part of the mentality of some Muslims.

In August the Swami also issued a second edition, with a Hindi translation, of his *Khatare kā Ghamā*.¹⁷ In the new introduction he referred to the fact that Gandhi had strongly condemned Nizami's book, *Daī Islām*, in his article in *Young India* of 29 May 1924. Nizami had sent a telegram to the Mahatma, telling him that he had left some 'so-called objectionable matter' out of his second edition, and was prepared to accept the Mahatma's suggestions for future editions. He even visited Gandhi to tender a personal explanation.¹⁸ In *Young India* of 26 June 1924, the Mahatma wrote that all that was not enough: the pamphlet had done great harm, especially in the Nizam's dominions, and only a 'radical' revision was acceptable to him. The Swami retorted that even that was insufficient: the pamphlet had exerted influence all over North India too, and its nefariousness needed to be thoroughly exposed. That is why he had decided to reissue his own pamphlet.

In this new edition the Swami added a third section dealing with yet another aspect of Muslim conspiracy, advocated by Maulana Abdul Bari, whom he accused of promoting the killing of Muslim apostates. The Swami had obviously been very distressed by Gandhi's partiality: whereas the Mahatma criticized him severely in his article, he had written about Abdul Bari with but slight disapproval, and with much praise: 'he is a simple child of God . . . he is a friend . . .'¹⁹ The Swami wrote that the troubles in Delhi at Bazar-id were caused primarily by Nizami's writings and by Abdul Bari's declaration about the lawfulness of killing an apostate.²⁰ Abdul Bari had also stated that he did not believe that any religion except Islam had the right to convert, and that Muslims

could collaborate with anybody, except those who were intent on making Muslims into apostates. Indeed, Abdul Bari had made a cutting personal attack on the Swami in the following words

Are the deeds of Shradhdhananda the deeds of the Hindus? As far as we have come to know from the Hindus, he is not a representative of the Hindus, neither is he connected with a large organization. He calls himself an Arya, whose number even now is very small . . . It is a society without religion . . . It is our duty to reflect seriously about crushing that little organization that wishes to destroy Hindu-Muslim unity by the *shuddhi* movement, and about engaging the help of the other Hindu castes in this holy work.⁹¹

It would be difficult to imagine how one could cram into one paragraph more statements that would hurt the Swami more deeply.

On 12 September the same year the Swami started a series of daily articles in the Urdu *Tej* entitled 'Blind Faith', which were later collected and published as 'Blind Faith and secret holy war'⁹² Here the Swami painted the Muslim conspiracy on a broad historical canvas. Islam inherited its 'blind faith', 'which has wrought more havoc on mankind than all the wars waged by kings', from Judaism, 'founded on the very principle of aggression'⁹³ First he treated the Sunnis, emphasizing their history of 'massacre and looting',⁹⁴ and their open support, even today, of the killing of apostates. Here he came back to Abdul Bari, and also gave a lengthy account of the recent official stoning to death of a Muslim apostate in Kabul, appending to this story reports of approval given to this action by many Muslim leaders and organizations in India.

The bulk of the text was devoted to the Shias, and here the Swami revealed an even more pernicious aspect of Muslim conspiracy—the insidious methods by which Shia sectarian offshoots had surreptitiously tempted Hindus into Islam. He recounted their historical origin, tracing their connection with the famous sect of the Hassassin, the 'assassins', basing his story on von Hammer's work, *History of the Assassins*. This led up to an exposure of the Shia Muslim groups in India who accepted the authority of the Aga Khan. Many pages were devoted to the Khojas and their 'secret propaganda of Islam'.⁹⁵ By preaching the doctrine that the Aga Khan was the 'living *avatar*', they gradually enticed Hindus into Islam; by making these unsuspecting Hindus *bhagats* of their leader they 'surreptitiously'⁹⁶ submerged them into Islam. This

was the line of attack of the Khojas, the Gupta Sect, and the Shamsis. That was nothing else, wrote the Swami, but what the title of his book proclaimed: *Khufya Jihād*, Secret Holy War.

The Swami did not relent. In early 1924 he arranged for the republication of von Hammer's *History of the Assassins*,⁹⁷ and he wrote a long introduction to that edition. He repeated what he had said about the Hassassin and their heirs, the followers of the Aga Khan. But he added to this a full-scale attack on Christianity, with the Jesuits as prime target. The Crusaders had learnt the methods of the Hassassin, and brought them back to Europe. Ignatius of Loyola became the founder of the 'Christian Assassins' when he established the Jesuit order. Then followed copious quotations from Griesinger's work about Jesuit misdeeds in India. The whole point of the introduction was to show that both Islam and Christianity were propagated 'by open violence and compulsion', and also by 'the secret dagger' and 'cunning devices'. These were writings inspired by frightening bias. They constituted the Swami's attempt to prove the existence of a Muslim conspiracy of vast proportions. By showing that historically some Muslims and Christian sects had used assassination and other underhand methods, he wanted to implant the idea in readers' minds that these were not aberrations, but natural consequences of 'blind faith', and therefore to be expected at any time, even today.

From the end of 1923 to early 1925 the Swami produced a stream of articles, pamphlets, and books, all concentrating on different aspects of a broad Muslim conspiracy that threatened the very existence of Hinduism. The Swami showed again and again how the Muslims themselves saw the Arya Samaj as the vanguard of the defence of Hinduism, and made it their prime target. Gandhi's attack on the Samaj and the Swami, especially combined with his loving attitude to Muslim leaders accused by the Swami, was a major element in this development. Another reason for the Swami's increasing panic was no doubt the sudden increase in communal riots in 1924, with Muslims mostly on the attack. Bazaar disturbances in Delhi in July were followed by the desecration of Hindu temples in Amethi, Sambhal, and Gulbarga in August, and by the bloody September riots of Kohat, whence the Hindu population fled for safety.⁹⁸

Gandhi was horrified by these events, and started a twenty-one day fast in Delhi on 17 September 'as a penance and a prayer'.⁹⁹

The country responded by organizing another Unity Conference. Mohammed Ali, Ajmal Khan, and Shradhdhananda were among its initiators, and it drew some three hundred men from all parts of the country, gathered to devise ways of restoring communal unity. Motilal Nehru took the chair, and the first act of the Conference was to send a message to the Mahatma imploring him to break his fast and join the meetings. But he declined. Shradhdhananda was a member of the huge Subject Committee of eighty, and also of the eleven-member sub-committee appointed to consider the resolutions proposed. It was a long and tedious gathering, and only after six days, on 1 October, did the draft resolutions finally come before the full conference, by which time the ranks of its eminent members were somewhat depleted. The resolutions condemned all acts of impropriety, and called for goodwill and cooperation, but, although Gandhi ended his fast, it had been a futile exercise without real effect.¹⁰⁰

The Mahasabha connection weakens, and snaps

During this conference Shradhdhananda made an important long statement on 'his present views and future programme', which occupied a whole page of the *Leader* of 1 October: it was a signpost to the new direction he was taking. Now that the Panjab wrongs had been forgotten and the Khilafat question eliminated, he wrote, Congress had only one aim: 'the attainment of Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means'. As for the means by which to achieve that end, the Swami said that the destructive programme of boycott and non-cooperation had failed and should be abandoned. Congress should also drop the first item of its constructive programme, the removal of untouchability, which should 'be left to the Hindus', otherwise it might accentuate Hindu-Muslim tension. As for the second item, Hindu-Muslim unity, 'the Congress cannot succeed . . . unless the movement starts internally among both the parties'. He wholly approved of the third item, spinning, which would have a healthy effect 'in weaning rowdy elements from communal and other mischief'. His advice to Congress was to work in the legislatures on the basis of responsive cooperation.

The second part of the statement referred to the *shuddhi* work. The Swami had resigned from the Shuddhi Sabha presidency because his radical actions, such as interdining with untouchables,

embarrassed many of the orthodox. He urged the Arya workers in the Sabha to involve the Sanatan Dharm Hindus as much as possible in their work. As for the Hindu *sangathan* movement, for which he had made several tours, he felt it was now well launched, and it could be tackled successfully with the cooperation of the orthodox. He himself would no longer be working at *sangathan* as a member of the Mahasabha, 'but as a *sannyasi* I shall always be ready to give the best advice that I can to the workers'.

The Swami then proceeded to speak about his connection with the Arya Samaj. He no longer had any connection with the Gurukul or with the Sarvadeshik Sabha, and his presidency of the Dayanand Birth Centenary Celebrations Committee was only nominal. After this he went on to say:

It might be asked whether I mean to work for the removal of untouchability under the aegis of the Arya Samaj organization as was perhaps gathered from hints I gave in my recent discourses. I want to say plainly that neither in the matter of the removal of untouchability nor in that of the reclamation or reconversion of Christianized and Mohammedanized Hindus do my ideas coincide with the way in which the present day Arya Samaj leaders are working. Before the Arya Samaj dares to take the above burdens upon its shoulders it has to strengthen its own organization by uniting all interests and by purifying the practical side of the life of reform in the Varn Ashram Dharm. At present the Arya Samaj has not the vitality to absorb foreign elements in its body politic.¹⁰¹

We have noticed how the Arya Samaj loomed larger in the previous year in the consciousness of the Swami, as the body that should more effectively be the main agent in the reconstruction of Hindu unity, and as the body most feared by the Muslims. This statement did not deny that, but suggested that if the Samaj were to fulfil that role, it badly needed to reorganize itself.

The statement ended in a note of retirement, an echo of the declaration he made when he took *sannyās* on leaving the Gurukul:

Having severed my direct connection with all these movements I intend to dedicate the remaining days of my life to literary work which will be of two kinds. The first will consist in giving my experience of men, institutions and ideas to the general public and the second of diving into the valuable treasures of Sanskrit literature of all sorts which I have been able to obtain by the merest chance. Whenever I feel inclined to go round for dissemination of the Vedic Dharm I shall go like a *Sannyasi*, free from all restraints of time, subject and organization. I hope the promoters of organizations will see that it will be difficult for me to book myself to order.¹⁰²

The first task the Swami undertook was the composition of his *Hindu Sangathan, Saviour of the Dying Race*, which was completed by the end of November that year, but published only in early 1926.¹⁰³ This is an extensive statement of the Swami's precise view of the situation at that time. The book started with his interpretation of the causes of the decline of the Hindu population, which commenced from the seventh century A.D. Firstly there were the conversion movements. The Swami summarized the story he had told before in his vernacular writings of Muslim conversions by force, and by 'other means', and of the conversions to Christianity by the Portuguese. The second cause of degeneration was the disintegration of the Aryan class system through the emergence of castes and sub-castes, the introduction of the cancer of untouchability, the rise of the custom of child-marriage multiplying the number of child-widows, and the neglect of *brahmacharya*. The next section of the work outlined the history of the origin and development of the idea of Hindu *sangathan* from the foundation of the Panjab Hindu Sabhas to the establishment of the Hindu Mahasabha.

In the last ten pages of his book the Swami enumerated the ways in which Hindu *sangathan* should be transformed into a powerful movement. He welcomed the approval of the Mahasabha for *shuddhi* and for the acceptance even of non-Hindus into the Hindu fold: 'Thus the moral sanction of the Hindu community as a whole is with the reformers in this respect.'¹⁰⁴ The first remedy was 'to make the Bharatiya Hindu Shuddhi Sabha a living body, to collect lakhs of rupees for pushing on work in all directions and to induce selfless men of pure intents to go about persuading Hindus to take back to their bosom their strayed brethren'.¹⁰⁵ The second remedy was to be the revival of the 'ancient Ashram Dharma', by raising the age of marriage, and by allowing a widower of the three higher *varnas* who wanted to remarry, to take only a widow as his new partner. The third remedy was to allow 'unconsummate child widows' to remarry if they so wished.

The next remedy was to be the elimination of caste and the revival of the ancient *varnadharma*, which could only gradually be achieved. A start should be made by the abolition of all sub-castes, and by the elimination of untouchability through the absorption of the depressed classes into the four principal castes

Marriage alliances should only gradually be widened, but 'interdining among all the castes should be commenced at once'.¹⁰⁶

At this point the Swami accused the Mahasabha of weakness causing great confusion, by refusing to issue general directives and leaving to local Hindus the decision of granting or denying the untouchables their rights of using wells, worshipping in temples, and entering schools. Even worse was the authoritative dogma laid down by the Mahasabha that it was, according to *Sanātan Dharma*, against the *Shāstras* and custom to give untouchables the sacred thread, teach them the *Vedas*, and interdine with them. Indignantly the Swami exclaimed,

To get rid of all this rigmarole and to root out the curse of unreachability unapproachability, untouchability and exclusiveness, there is only one sovereign remedy—and that is the resuscitation of the Ancient Aryan 'Varnadharma'.¹⁰⁷

The Swami agreed that cow-protection was a 'powerful factor . . . in giving the Hindu community a common plane for joint action', but he stressed that it would remain only 'a dream of impractical sentimentalists', unless the defection of the depressed classes to other religions was stopped and the inhuman pressure on Hindu widows to seek solace outside Hinduism was removed. The introduction of Hindi as the lingua franca was also necessary, but it could only become a possibility after the disappearance of caste and sectarian prejudices.¹⁰⁸

He ended with a plea to the Mahasabha to adopt a broader and a more effective outlook by making a clear distinction between dogmatic matters and social norms when issuing its directives.

The salvation of the community depends upon common action taken by the Hindu Samaj as a whole, but individual salvation is the outlook of individuals. Theoretical Dharma is connected with individual salvation and, therefore, there is room for Theists, Pantheists, Henotheists and even Atheists in the broad lap of the organized Hindu Samaj. But the code of practical Dharma has to do with the community as a whole and, therefore here the plea of individual Dharma should not be allowed to prevail nor should it hamper the efforts of the organized Hindu Samaj towards national salvation.¹⁰⁹

The Swami still believed therefore in the necessary task of the Mahasabha for the sake of Hindu *sangathan*, although his criticism of that organization's methods was severe. That is why, notwithstanding his desire for retirement expressed in his statement of 1 October, the Swami was unable to completely cut himself off

from the Shuddhi Sabha or the Mahasabha. No doubt it was not just his own drive for action that compelled him, but also the repeated efforts of the leaders of those movements to keep the Swami actively involved he never could say no to an invitation to work for causes in which he believed so deeply. So we notice that in March 1925 Shradhananda was again elected as Vice-President of the Shuddhi Sabha,¹¹⁰ and at the Shuddhi Conference in Delhi one year later he was appointed Chairman of the Reception Committee, and then acting President of the Sabha.¹¹¹

His association with the Mahasabha had its ups and downs in the last two years of his life. He attended the Belgaum session in late December 1924, where he dramatically stated that 'the blood of Kohat is crying an S.O.S. to the whole Hindu community',¹¹² and promised that he was prepared to go himself and serve the refugees for a month. However, when a committee was formed to consider Hindu-Muslim problems, he was not included. At the April 1925 session in Calcutta, Lajpat Rai argued that the Mahasabha should keep out of politics, a problem that would increasingly preoccupy the leaders. The session reiterated its stand that conferring the sacred thread on untouchables, teaching them the *Vedas*, and interdining with them was 'against Dharma Shastras and Lokachar [custom]',¹¹³ and that such practices should not be performed in the name of the Mahasabha. Orthodox pressure was obviously on the increase, as was exemplified by a meeting of Sanatanists in Calcutta.¹¹⁴

The Swami was very unhappy and tendered his resignation as Vice-President and member of the Working Committee, but it was not accepted.¹¹⁵ On 24 June he again sent a letter of resignation to Lajpat Rai because Malaviya had refused to accept his proposal for a resolution on the remarriage of child-widows. The resignation was again sent back.¹¹⁶ The Swami urged in a statement to the press that the Mahasabha needed to liberalize its resolutions about untouchability, *shuddhi*, and the rescue of Hindu widows 'if a check is to be placed on Hindu downfall'.¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, at the Delhi meeting of the Committee, his name was included in a committee set up to consider the question of 'Hindu rights and privileges in regard to arti, music and religious processions',¹¹⁸ and he presided at the Hindu Mahasabha meeting in Bangalore in early December. Although he was present in December at Kanpur, his name was not mentioned in the report of the Mahasabha

proceedings.¹¹⁹ In March 1926 he again resigned from the Mahasabha because he was not allowed to move a resolution on the remarriage of child-widows.¹²⁰

The March 1926 meeting of the Mahasabha in Delhi was a very important one. Shradhananda was present from the first day, participating in the presidential procession. He again agreed to a compromise by withdrawing his resolution on widow-remarriage 'in order not to split the Mahasabha',¹²¹ and he was duly elected a Vice-President.¹²² The two most important issues before this session were the question of untouchability and that of putting up candidates for the coming Council elections. In the matter of untouchability, the Arya Samajists and the reform wing managed at last to get liberalizing resolutions through the Subject Committee. This caused a tremendous uproar in the plenary session, where the conservative wing threatened a walk-out. It is interesting to note that the Swami's son Indra played an important part in achieving that success. The Swami must have been pleased.¹²³

But the second important item on the agenda drew his strong opposition, when the Mahasabha decided to put up some candidates for the Council elections.¹²⁴ The long and heated discussions had led to the resolution that, although the Mahasabha would not formally become a political party, it would allow Hindu Sabha candidates to be put up in those localities where there seemed to be a threat to Hindu interests.¹²⁵ The Swami profoundly disagreed with this, and wrote in his final resignation letter, published in the *Liberator* of 23 September 1926: 'Since the Hindu Mahasabha has become a communal political organization, it has become impossible for me to take part in its work'. This was the cardinal reason, but the Swami added 'an even bigger reason', which gave expression to the frustrations his radical approach had met within the organization.

The Mahasabha does not consider it its duty to work for those social improvements which are utterly essential in order to save the Hindu community from total ruin, and the Sabha even puts obstacles in the way of its members who try to fulfil that very duty.¹²⁶

The Swami's relations with the Mahasabha were very complex right from the start. At the time of the decisive Banaras session and in the following months he had played a leading role in pushing the idea of Hindu *sangathan*, propagating it with his usual vigour and enthusiasm. But the radicalism of his approach on the two

issues of untouchability and *shuddhi*, which he considered the crucial problems of the Hindu community, led him again and again into clashes and produced repeated resignations. But these dissensions and temporary withdrawals never completely destroyed his faith in the important role the Mahasabha had to play in Hindu *sangathan*. That is why he always came back. The real internal leadership of the organization lay with Malaviya and Lajpat Rai, who were adept at the political game of compromise. That was not the Swami's way. But these leaders needed his compelling drive, enthusiasm, and charisma, and kept pulling him back into the organization. Even when the Swami withdrew from active participation in the managing bodies, he remained ready to participate in the many regional conferences as a free-lance propagandist of the idea of *sangathan*. It was only when the Mahasabha entered the field of politics that the Swami made the final break.¹²⁷

Sangathan of the Arya Samaj

As the Swami's involvement with the Mahasabha thus fluctuated, his eyes were drawn more and more towards the Arya Samaj. One of the reasons for this was his conviction that it would take a long time for the Hindu community to rally in the fight for the untouchables, and that immediate strong action could only be expected from the Arya Samaj. Already in early 1924, in his *Vartandā Mukhya Samaryā* he had answered the question 'Where should we turn for help?' with the rhetorical question 'On whom else falls the responsibility for the protection and uplift of the untouchables than on the followers of Dayananda?'¹²⁸ This conviction was strengthened by the increasing attacks on the Arya Samaj. Gandhi's statement in *Young India* of 29 May 1924 was very widely quoted and discussed in the papers, and it caused a considerable stir among Aryas all over India. This was followed by the concerted attacks of various Muslim writers, who singled the Samaj out as their primary target. The Muslim conspiracy which the Swami exposed in his successive writings was seen by him as making the destruction of the Samaj the first step in its overall campaign. All this led to his significant statement of 1 October 1924, where he admitted that the Samaj needed consolidation in order to take up the task it was called on to perform.¹²⁹

And then, in early 1925 came the centenary celebrations of

Swami Dayananda's birth. The Swami had been thinking about that event for years; in fact three years earlier he briefly sketched in his diary how the centenary should be celebrated.¹³⁰ When this outline is compared with what in fact happened, it becomes evident that the Swami's ideas were decisive in the planning. The actual organization was carried out under the leadership of Mahatma Narayan Swami, who was the then President of the Sarva-deshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, a post he held for a period of fifteen years.¹³¹ But Shraddhananda was an integral part of the celebrations, and was present in Mathura by the end of January 1925, more than two weeks before the centenary week, which lasted from 15 to 21 February.

About two hundred thousand Aryas streamed into Mathura, the city where Dayananda the lone searcher was transformed into a fiery reformer under the influence of his *guru* Virjananda.¹³² A camp named Arya Nagar was constructed to house the pilgrims. It included all necessary facilities, but what struck a visitor was 'the austere simplicity of the entire arrangement'. The programme of the celebrations was very extensive, and included many other functions besides the massive *havan* and the *nagarkirtan*, a singing procession in which no less than 137 choirs marched. There were a series of conferences, some dealing with religious matters, others with cow-protection, *shuddhi*, and the depressed classes. A Youth Conference was held, an all-India Kshatriya Conference and a Symposium of poets. For a couple of weeks, the Dayananda Centenary Celebrations were featured in newspapers all over India.¹³³

One of the best sources for a general impression of the celebrations is the long article in the *Leader* of 2 April 1924, by a non-Arya who tried to put together what to his mind was most significant. First of all, he approved of the austerity of the facilities of the centenary camp, where one could only find shops for books and food, and none selling those cheap and ugly toys, 'foreign rubbish', so prominent at Hindu places of pilgrimage. English dress was conspicuous by its absence. The food was simple and shared equally by all without consciousness of caste taboos. This observer was very impressed by the great number of women participating; they were not anglicized, but utterly free from purdah, going about freely attending the functions they chose to attend without attracting undue notice anywhere.

But this witness was most of all impressed by the way the untouchables fitted into the picture:

I could mark no outward distinction between them and others. It was a relief to observe them without any nervousness, they felt that their position in this gathering at least was secure. In the meetings, on the roads, in different functions they had accorded to them the elementary rights of human beings. The desire to uplift them did not at Muttra only end in talk and pious half-hearted resolutions as unhappily it so often does.¹³⁴

This sight must have pleased the Swami enormously, and confirmed his opinion that the Arya Samaj could fulfil the role he hoped it would assume. And this sentence of the non-Arya observer could well have been written by the Swami himself: 'I can say that in spite of the drawbacks and shortcomings of the Arya Samaj, I felt electrified and inspired and came back with faith vivified and strengthened in the future of the Hindu race.' Consolidation of the Arya Samaj became after the centenary celebrations the new, immediate and pressing cause of the Swami.¹³⁵

He now replaced the cry for Hindu *sangathan* by one for Arya *sangathan*: 'Instead of Hindu Sangathan I have written Arya Sangathan because without first achieving the consolidation of the Arya Samaj the consolidation of Hindu society cannot be brought into effect. That is why first of all the unification of the Arya Samaj must be achieved.'¹³⁶ On 24 June 1925 he announced that he was starting on a tour of the Panjab, and that he had a threefold objective:

In this tour my first objective is to free the Arya Samaj from its internal quarrels and base attitudes and direct it towards that road which Rishi Dayananda intended it to travel when he gave it birth. The second objective is to place before the Aryas a method of collaboration with the sects, Sanatanis, Jains, Sikhs, etc., which have sprung from the Aryan culture, and to try to engage all of them in the consolidation of their broad-based nation, while forgetting their minor differences. My third objective is to explain the real state of things to those Muslims who have been misguided by Maulvis inspired by selfishness.¹³⁷

This tour of the Panjab lasted over five weeks, and the Swami visited twenty-six townships from one end of the land of his birth to the other. He gave lectures and talked to representatives of both wings of the Arya Samaj, but somehow he was unable to speak to the important leaders of Lahore: they were conveniently absent. In *Arjun* the Swami published his basic proposals for the reunion

of the two wings, which he kept expounding in his lectures and conversations. After all these years the issue of meat-eating still occupied the central stage. The proposals also included another attempt to have the Sarvadeshik Sabha recognized by all as the national body: the Swami felt that, even if the Panjab Aryas could not be reconciled, the recognition of the Sarvadeshik by everybody would at least isolate the split within the Panjab.¹³⁸ The Swami also appealed to all Aryas to reform their attitude to the Sanatanis: they should discontinue all methods of provocation and inauation, they should respect the earnest convictions of the orthodox, and rely on the power of their example to win them over to the Vedic religion. He also urged the Aryas to immediately desist from any public debates with the Ahmadiyas: such debates were fruitless, he said, admitting that in earlier days he himself had mistakenly indulged in them.¹³⁹

The central aim and concern of the Swami in this attempt to rally and revitalize the Arya Samaj was the uplift of the untouchables. Earlier he had pleaded with Gandhi that Congress should leave the work for the untouchables in the hands of the Mahasabha, and now he urged the Mahasabha to leave that task to the Arya Samaj. He appealed to the Samaj to boldly go ahead and realize that dream which for a short time seemed a reality at Mathura. He pleaded with the Aryas to treat the untouchables who had undergone *shuddhi* as complete equals in '*Ros-Beti-Vyavahar*', in questions of interdining and intermarriage, and to absorb them into their own communities 'like milk mixes with water'.

The radicalism of those directives was still the same as that which inspired Munshiram's speech immediately after his conversion: principles must become living realities. But the harsh tone of criticism and controversy that was part of his early radicalism had now completely disappeared:

The Vedic principles to which the Samaj adhere are so universal and self-evident that their very implementation constitutes their best propaganda. When the preachers of these principles make them into a living part of their own behaviour, and put the truth of these principles to the people in loving tones, then there will be no more need to criticize untruths. Those who have faith in the power of these Vedic principles, they no longer need to seek the help of the armal of criticism. When the sun of truth rises, then the dark night of untruth recedes by itself. If those, for whom welfare you now want to exert yourselves, are so irritated by your attacks that they do not

even want to listen to you any more, before whom will you then put your scheme of reform, so essential for the consolidation of the Aryan nation?¹⁴⁰

At a regional Widow-remarriage Conference held in his own town of Jullundur, the Swami had the satisfaction, as chairman, of steering to approval resolutions worthy of his radicalism. The conference expressed its disapproval of the marriage of boys before they were twenty-five years old and of girls before the age of sixteen: such unions were in violation of the *Shāstras*. It was also stated that no widower should marry a virgin, nor should a widow marry a bachelor, and that the marriage of virgin widows should be celebrated in exactly the same manner as that of virgin brides. Moreover, children born from the union of widows and widowers should enjoy the same legal rights and privileges as those born in the first marriage. These were indeed revolutionary resolutions, worthy of the radicalism of Swami Dayananda himself.¹⁴¹

But the Swami's final attempt to reunite the Panjabi Samaj ended in failure; he did not even succeed in meeting the real leaders of the two wings. The Swami was disappointed

The situation now is that the two parties do not want to meet . . . Now one must wait for the time when the feeling of compassion for the Aryan race wells up in the hearts of the leaders of both parties . . . My own efforts have now come to an end, I will intervene no more in this matter.

With pain he noted that some of the Arya office-holders were convinced that he was making all these efforts in order to snatch their throne. 'That is their mistake. What position is there, which I have not given up to make place for other keen workers?' he asked, and added sorrowfully, 'Who can save anyone from the results of his *karma*!' Still, he did not give up all hope, and he made a last plea to the two parties not to let 'the sparks of that fire of dissent and enmity' spread outside the Panjab.¹⁴²

Yet his faith in the mission of the Samaj, though it had suffered a shock, was not broken. He set out on his second tour of South India with that mission foremost in his mind:

The suppressed classes of South India can no longer bear Hindu tyranny. Their *dharma*, which they love, is in danger. The Christian missionary with his millions is at their door. Mahomedan Mullahs are appealing for lakhs and rushing to the scene. The Arya Samaj mission alone can save the situation by taking them into the bosom of the Vedic church.¹⁴³

As always, opposition only strengthened his resolve: 'Covert and open threats of violence have been used and I am being flooded with most shameful obscene literature and photography to induce me to give up the work of organizing my community. All this has no effect upon me.' He left Delhi on 30 October 1925, and, after spending a couple of days in Bombay, he reached Madras on 5 November, and stayed on in the province till the end of the month.¹⁴⁴

An incident in Palghat on 13 November put the Swami and the Samaj again in the headlines. It was similar to the incident that occurred in his first South Indian tour in mid-1924. On the opening day of the 'car festival' the divisional magistrate promulgated an order prohibiting Arya Samaj converts from entering the orthodox Hindu streets. This led to a public protest meeting, which passed among others the following resolution:

That this meeting begs to express its unqualified condemnation of the utterly illegal procedure and policy of religious interference adopted by the Madras Government in extending its order of prohibition to the Arya Samaj converts from the depressed classes while such converts to Christianity and Mahomedanism are not so prohibited.¹⁴⁵

The incident drew a strong editorial from the *Leader* of 21 November condemning 'the intolerant and wholly short-sighted attitude of the orthodox Hindus', and praising Shradhdhananda 'for taking up their cause [that of the suppressed classes] and for valiantly leading the movement'.

However, the Swami and the Samaj were really only touching the surface in South India. The secretary of the Andhra Arya Mission made that abundantly clear when he wrote:

Especially in South India they know nothing about the Arya Samaj. What more lamentable condition can there be than the following. When Swami Shradhdhananda last October came to South India, he received some letters from English-educated people, wherein the following question was asked: 'Last February 1925 you people started an Arya Samaj in Mathura; where has this society been propagated, how many members does it have, and what are its rules?'¹⁴⁶

In answer to this pressing problem the Swami started a new weekly, the *Liberator*. While all his former periodicals had used the vernacular, this one was in English for the special purpose of 'communicating his view to the intelligentsia of South India where the

evil [of untouchability] exists in the most objectionable and inhuman form'.¹⁴⁷ Its aim was strongly stated by the Swami:

The uplift of the untouchables and their assimilation in the Hindu polity is the very plinth on which alone the edifice of free India can be constructed. Therefore, the *Liberator* will make the cause of the so-called untouchables its main concern. This doctrine of untouchability is the gangrene of Hindu polity. Diehard vanity, deep-rooted prejudice, degenerating ignorance and doping superstition are the germs that feed this gangrene. Each one of these has to be attacked for getting rid of the gangrene.¹⁴⁸

Thus the evening of his life found the Swami still engaged with more determination than ever on that great task he set himself when he left jail in 1922 'to Save the dying Race'. He had started by launching the *shuddhi* movement and, having involved the Mahasabha in this work, he went across North India as the propagandist of Hindu *sangathan*. But the basic radicalism of his dedication found no scope in the hesitant, lumbering march of the Mahasabha. He turned again towards his Arya Samaj. He was disappointed when he failed to reunite the two wings in the Panjab, but he pressed on by making the Aryas responsible for the uplift of the untouchables in South India and by casting his eyes outside India, sending Arya missionaries to Burma, Africa, and Assam.¹⁴⁹ Little did he realize at the age of sixty-nine, frail in body but unshaken in spirit, that the opening year was to bring him more heartbreak and finally the crown of martyrdom.

During the year 1925 the Swami wrote a series of meditations, which were published under the title *Mukti-Sopān*, 'stairway to liberation', and constitute his final testament in the devotional sphere.¹⁵⁰ During the long years he edited the *Saddharma-prachārak* he regularly wrote religious, meditative pieces, which usually started with a Vedic text. He did the same for *Shraddhā*, and this collection is his last effort in that genre. The text stands in strong contrast with the polemical writings of the Swami. Firstly, these meditations treated general religious and ethical topics totally removed from any dogmatic framework. They were obviously directed to the widest possible range of religious Hindus, and carefully avoided any doctrinal matter that might offend. The booklet treated subjects such as the inner peace of God's presence, the need for faith in God and in the immortality of the soul; the qualities of teachers, pupils, and leaders; the consolations of friendship, the sanctity of marriage; the duties of parents; the value of

brahmacharya. In these meditations the Swami's style was totally different from that of his other writings. They are built around sustained images and metaphors and flow gently in a simple, Sanskritic Hindi, constantly drawing upon that lasting treasure of Hindu devotional writing, the beautiful metaphors of the *Rigveda*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Gītā*.

The last months: martyrdom

At the end of March 1926 the Swami performed a *shuddhi* in Delhi that shook the Muslim community. A Muslim lady from Karachi, Agha Begum, arrived in the capital and asked the Swami to be converted to the Arya faith. She had read a lot about Hinduism, and had decided to undergo *shuddhi* and become a member of the Arya Samaj. Against the will of her husband she had secretly left her home and made her way to Delhi with her children. The ceremony was duly performed, she was given the new name Shanti Devi, and with her children was put up in the Arya Widows' Home. Months later her husband tracked her down in Delhi, and he attempted to persuade his wife to change her mind. When this proved unsuccessful, he instituted on 2 September a law case against Swami Shradddhananda, Shanti Devi, the Swami's son Indra, and his son-in-law Dr Sukhdeo, for conspiracy in the abduction of his wife and children.¹⁵¹ There were several postponements. In one case the complainant was agreeable to withdrawing the suit if the accused returned the three minors, but this compromise failed. The case was finally decided by the court on 4 December with the clear acquittal of all the accused.¹⁵² During these months, however, the Muslim community was in a ferment of indignant animosity over the incident. Some Muslim papers were violent in their condemnation of the Swami, especially Hasan Nizami in his *Darvesh*. For months Indra was extremely concerned about the safety of his father, who stubbornly insisted on ignoring all threats and continued to take evening walks in the surrounding Muslim quarter.¹⁵³

In the middle of 1926 the coming elections for the councils became the main political preoccupation in India. After splits and negotiations the Congress adopted the Swarajya policy, and the dissidents formed a new party called the Independent Congress party, made up of those who disagreed with Congress policy for the legislature.

On 25 December 1925 they issued their manifesto in which they explained their policy of Responsive Cooperation.¹⁵⁴ Malaviya and Lajpat Rai, prominent leaders of the new party, repeatedly asked Shradhdhananda to support their candidates, especially their candidate for the Banaras region. The Swami was very reluctant because he had been outside politics for many years. Another difficulty was that his son Indra was supporting the Congress. The situation deeply disturbed Indra, who had never yet taken a stand on the public platform in opposition to his father. Lajpat Rai came especially to Delhi to try to make Indra change his mind. The Swami, for his part, having listened to his son's arguments, gave him his blessing to act as his conscience demanded. Indra recalled the trauma he experienced in making his decision:

I was confronted with a big moral dilemma. I considered both Swami and Lajpat worthy of great reverence. I did not have the strength to evade the cause of even one of them. When both were of the same opinion, what was I to do? . . . I explained to Lajpat that his request was for me as compelling as that of Swami. But the Swami had already allowed me to exercise my own freedom in these issues of personal conviction. On the strength of that I had the courage to act according to my conscience. I hoped that he too would give me the right not to turn a deaf ear to the voice of my conscience.¹⁵⁵

Pressure was then put on the Swami by Ghanshyamdas Birla, the Independent Congress candidate for Banaras. As a person he strongly appealed to the Swami. His support for the Hindu cause in both the *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movements had been considerable. In fact, the Birla family was easily the most important financial contributor to the funds of the *shuddhi* movement.¹⁵⁶ During his electioneering tour Ghanshyamdas reiterated his support for Hindu *sangathan* which, he said, was 'the most important work before the country', and which was incomplete 'without the uplift of the depressed classes'.¹⁵⁷ Finally the Swami relented and promised his support. The personal qualities and attitudes of Ghanshyamdas were an important reason for that decision. the Swami was not supporting a party, but rather a candidate of exceptional merit. However, two political considerations also helped him to commit himself.¹⁵⁸ His gesture was one way of publicly reiterating his disapproval of the Mahasabha entering into the arena of politics, and of reaffirming his conviction that the Congress policy of reconciliation with the Muslims spelled disaster for the Hindu cause. He went to the U.P. in mid-November.

He toured the district giving speeches in many cities, supporting the policies of the Independent Congress, but most of all giving his support to Birla, 'one of those very few persons who were ever eager to do as much as they could for every good cause and in the interest of Hindus particularly and his countrymen generally' 159 At the same time the Swami's son Indra was on the hustings in the same area, supporting the Congress candidate.¹⁶⁰ The Swami kept up his hectic pace till the end of November, and had the satisfaction of seeing Birla elected with a large majority.

But the tour had seriously impaired his weakened constitution. On his return from Banaras he was persuaded to go to Gurukul Indraprastha to recover. But he became very ill on his arrival there, and was promptly brought back to Delhi for treatment. Drs Sukhdeo and Ansan diagnosed bronchial pneumonia, a serious condition for a man of his age in a state of exhaustion. However, excellent care helped him over the crisis, though the Swami remained very weak. He realized that death had hovered close. He asked Indra and his friends to arrange it so that he could write his will, but they put it off until later. He implored his son Indra to finish that project for which he had himself collected materials for many years, the *History of the Arya Samaj*. In these days of slow recovery his family and friends tried hard to encourage him, but the Swami himself had the strong feeling that 'this body is no longer capable of service. My wish is that I be reborn in India so that I can serve her again.'¹⁶¹

On 23 December, Indra and others had paid their usual visit to the Swami around midday, and they left him to have some rest. Around four p.m. a Muslim called Abdul Rashid came to the house and asked to see the Swami in order to discuss some problems of Islamic religion. Dharm Singh, the Swami's personal attendant, was inclined to refuse him access, but the visitor insisted. When the Swami called his attendant, and was told of the visitor, he invited Abdul Rashid in and explained that he could not help him right away, but would be happy to do so later. The visitor then asked for a glass of water, and while Dharm Singh was taking his glass away, he rushed up to the Swami and fired two bullets point-blank into his chest. Dharm Singh came running and was shot in the thigh. The commotion brought Dharm Pal, the Swami's secretary running; he overpowered the assassin and held him till the police arrived.¹⁶²

Indra arrived within minutes, but the Swami had died instantly. As he looked upon his father's face, peaceful in death, Indra thought of those words the Swami had uttered not long before: 'Yet it is a source of contentment to me that I am singled out as the one worthy of wearing the crown of martyrdom.'¹⁶³

Conclusion

Shradhananda, the man

It is not surprising that the biographer finds it hard to arrive at a balanced view of the man Shradhananda, when one considers that even his son Indra found it difficult to fully understand his father, he wrote that it was somewhat of a miracle that for fifteen years he had remained his father's faithful supporter, notwithstanding the great differences between them.¹ Most judgements of the Swami's personality have tended to be partisan, by either extolling his greatness and veiling his weaknesses, or by berating his faults and turning a blind eye to his qualities. Inevitably the truth lies somewhere in between, and it is only by a thorough, sympathetic yet critical study of all his writings and activities that such a balanced appraisal can be achieved.

After a youth markedly free of social restraints, during which Munshiram tended to be strongly influenced by his immediate environment, he grew into a singularly 'free' individualist, for whom bonds of caste, religious tradition, or local custom, had but little binding power. The wedding of his eldest daughter was the last occasion in which he willingly adapted to social and caste expectations.² After that he tended to break every rule and convention. He could no longer fit into the society and ethos of the legal profession, so he opted out of it; he was too radical even for most members of the Mahatma section of the Arya Samaj; he even gave away the patrimony due to his sons. His long residence at the Gurukul Kangri, an artificial miniature society isolated from Hindu social and religious pressures, accentuated that sense of freedom, and his acceptance of *sannyās* even put the seal of religious approval upon it. This strong sense of individual freedom often made it difficult for the Swami to understand and sympathize with the social pressures the majority of Hindus were constantly exposed to.

In the ups and downs of falls and conversions of his youth, it was usually a strong emotional and moral motive that stirred Munshiram to free himself and to reorganize his life. This tendency grew even more powerful in manhood. He needed a big, inspiring

motive to launch him into action; this motive always had deep religious and emotional roots. He was not given to coldly rational considerations and careful advance planning; his commitments tended to be impulsive and total. Indra perceptively expressed it thus:

He was by nature an emotional man driven by faith, I am by nature a cool follower of reason. It took him not even a moment's time to arrive at a decision or to take great steps towards its implementation. I am very slow in coming to a decision, and I need even more time in taking a big leap to follow it up. All his ideas were pervaded with a radicalism which is absent in me. When he was considering taking a big step, I never found him asking questions such as, where will the funds for this project come from, will my old companions not be displeased, where will I find new collaborators; how can I avoid possible obstacles? His mind was made in such a way that what sensible people call worldly foresight or wisdom, did not occur to him. When he took a big step, then he simply announced even to the people closely involved with him, 'that is my decision'.³

The Swami also needed to make a public commitment, which was a challenge both to himself and to the public at large. The story of his life is punctuated with these announcements, from his first address to the Lahore Arya Samaj, his declaration at the time of Lekhram's death, his public oath when he set out on his begging tour for the Gurukul, and so on right to the end of his life. When the Swami took an important decision, he always made sure that it was clear to anybody who cared to listen.

As he grew older and as his public stature increased, he tended more and more to see his causes in a dramatic, even in an apocalyptic light. These causes were conceived as pressingly urgent, indeed absolutely vital for the very survival of the Hindus or the Indian nation. That is why the demands of these causes always were to him radical and total. 'Gradualism of reform', 'piecemeal implementation', 'going one step back in order to advance two', 'waiting for a more opportune time', and other such expressions were to the Swami unacceptable excuses for, or rationalizations of, the fear of total commitment. A critically urgent cause demanded no less than radical dedication.

That is why the Swami could not play the game of compromise. Time and again his stubborn radicalism led him into disagreements with whatever organizations he became involved in, the Arya Samaj, the Gurukul, Congress, the Shuddhi Sabha, the Mahasabha. On their platforms and in their councils his passionate radicalism

relentlessly spoke out. All these bodies were subject to manifold internal and external pressures from a variety of interests on the part of their supporters and their antagonists. It needed the enormous diplomatic skill of leaders such as Gandhi, Lajpat Rai, and Malaviya, to balance these forces in order to keep the organizations together and moving. The Swami had no such aptitude, and his repeated letters of resignation from these bodies tell the frustrations of his radical expectations. At the same time the repeated refusals of his resignations clearly show how much the leaders felt that they needed the Swami's drive and his influence over the people.

These characteristics were the root-cause of the many broken friendships that litter the highways and byways of the Swami's life. The unbending radicalism of his demands in the committee and on the rostrum antagonized those who appreciated and practised the necessary art of diplomacy and compromise. His sometimes sudden decisions and reversals at times put his closest followers in awkward positions, as they had been left behind without being properly consulted. The supreme freedom of his mentality made it difficult for him to understand the complexities of other people's lives, and the outspokenness of his judgement on them left festering wounds.

Munshiram's long, bitter controversies with Panjabi Arya leaders need some explanation. No doubt the very contentious nature of some of his opponents, as well as his own temperament played a part in those wrangles. But in this matter, which gave Munshiram among some people a bad reputation which they were never prepared to revise, the considered judgement of Lajpat Rai is important, especially as it was written in 1914, before Munshiram left the Gurukul

But I must say that I have largely revised the opinion I had of him in 1892-93 and for several years after, that he was a mischief-monger, a disunity-monger, and a hunter after fame with the ambition of becoming a leader. Now I believe it was unjust to pronounce upon Lala Munshiram's character on the basis of what he did in party spirit for party ends.⁴

- Accusations of financial mismanagement and corruption play too prominent a part in these controversies to be simply shrugged aside. The perusal of his opponents' accusations and of Munshiram's defence in his *Dukhi Dil* allow us to make two important points. First of all, any accusation that he at any time abstracted

money for his own sake, to make his life more comfortable, is to be completely rejected. His record of utter selflessness in money matters and of personal frugality, speaks for itself. The second observation is the following. Munshiram was continuously and frantically involved in fund-raising, sometimes even for different purposes at the same time. Proper account-keeping must have been a constant problem for one so busy and so personally unconcerned with money, especially since the institutional relationships between the Panjab Arya Samaj bodies were extremely complicated. It was these very complications, not deliberate mismanagement or misuse of funds, that gave some opponents the openings or the excuses they were seeking in order to accuse their victim. The lengthy document *Dukhi Dil* stands as a painful record of these truths. The relentless accusations of some of his fiercest enemies, which they kept publishing in their papers, forced Munshiram to write that pathetic book.

The Swami was not a theoretical thinker, but a man of action, 'driven by faith'⁵ as Indra put it, or, in Lajpat Rai's words, 'dominated by lofty and noble impulses'.⁶ His many writings reflect that temperament. They largely deal with practical and immediate questions, in the style of the journalist, and with high ideals, in the style of the visionary. His occasional excursions into the theological realm show a mind thoroughly steeped in the thought of Swami Dayananda, the source of most of his ideas and ideals. He had deeply studied and absorbed that Arya ideology, and understood it better than most Aryas. As he moved away from the too narrow guru-worship fostered by the Mahatmas, he came to better understand the breadth of approach and the dogmatic tolerance Dayananda wanted to instil in his Arya Samaj for better service to the Indian nation as a whole.

Shradhdhananda's writings also occasionally treat the theology and history of other religions. Whenever he wrote such tracts, it was in a defensive spirit against attacks from Islam or Christianity. These writings were all totally derivative, extensively drawing on extremely biased sources without any attempt at discrimination or critical analysis. These passages were the most partisan and objectionable of his writings, and became an important cause of intense Muslim antagonism. However, it needs to be pointed out that the Swami never stooped to the vituperation, the scurrilous personal incriminations, and the incitement to violence, which

can be found in so many contemporary fanatical propaganda pamphlets, Hindu, as well as Arya and Muslim.

As he was basically a 'moral' thinker, the Swami's best ideas are to be found in the passages dealing with the evils that pervaded the Hindu social system. His discourses on caste and untouchability, from his early *Varnavyavasthā* to his *Hindu Sangathan*, show a keen mind free from the cobwebs of caste and other prejudices, and able to penetrate to the heart of the matter beyond superficial complexities. He clearly saw the ineffectiveness of purely cosmetic social reform, and he proclaimed that the very root-cause of the problem had to be tackled, namely *roti-beti-vyavahār*, interdining and intermarriage. At the same time he accepted that the first step in that direction had to come through the break-down of the sub-caste divisions, leading to the amalgamation of smaller units into the major classes.

Another part of the Swami's writings, too often overlooked, throws light on a different side of his personality. Throughout his public life he regularly wrote meditative columns in his journals, which have occasionally been collected in book form. These pieces, together with the available extracts of his diary, reveal a man of very deep religious sentiment, a man of a profound devotion that had been nurtured from early youth by the influence of his father and the reading of the *Rāmcharitmānas*.

His causes

In the early days of his leadership Munshiram, mainly through the influence of Gurudatta and Lekhram, was swept up into the internal struggle of the Panjab Arya Samaj, and into the often petty squabbles of that confrontation. But he soon grew out of that atmosphere with his first great dream, that of the Gurukul. He became a man of broad vision, and the causes he took up were all major issues of his time. The Gurukul, to which he devoted nearly twenty years of his maturity, was undoubtedly a great dream and became a major achievement. The very creation of that institution made him grow in stature for all to see, a man with a vision, prepared to dedicate himself without reservation, and with the ability and the stubbornness to persevere against all odds. As Gandhi said, 'Single-handed he turned a wilderness

into a magnificent boarding college on the banks of the sacred Ganges'.⁷

During this period Munshiram's attitude to the Arya Samaj underwent a considerable change as he withdrew himself from the Panjab controversies and aspired to a more national role. His efforts in clearing the Samaj's name with the Government and in establishing the Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha constituted one aspect of that task. Moreover, he repeatedly attempted to liberate the Samaj from its more sectarian tendencies and to steer it towards a more positive type of leadership, which would abandon its tradition of controversy and criticism. However, his success in these efforts was limited because some Arya leaders persisted in seeing in him a man of personal ambitions, careless about destroying the reputation of others. The old wounds still rankled. Yet towards the end of his life the Swami believed more strongly than ever that the Arya Samaj was called to play a vital pioneering role in 'saving the dying race'.

For many years the Swami had remained an aloof and slightly disdainful observer of the political arena, he despised the participants. He saw the princes as indolent exploiters and most Congressmen as self-satisfied word-spinners, both equally unworthy of representing the Indian people, as they were equally devoid of idealism. Mahatma Gandhi transformed that attitude overnight. His call for the fight for total freedom and his method inspired by religion and demanding complete dedication went straight to the Swami's heart. He immediately assumed a leading role in Gandhi's 'crusade', and became a national political leader, moving into the Congress high command. But he always remained a strange figure in the corridors of power, on account of his inflexible radicalism and his grand dreams. Notwithstanding repeated frustrations and clashes with the Mahatma, the Swami continued to work wholeheartedly for Congress as long as he remained convinced of its historic mission. But when he was released from jail at the end of 1922, and found the Khilafat movement all but shelved, the non-cooperation campaign in ruins, and Congress in a pitiful state of ineffective indecision, he said farewell to politics.

Immediately a new cause swept him up—Hindu *sangathan*. Although the idea had been aired for some years, the Swami had not seriously taken it up. But in 1923 the circumstances had changed

considerably. With the recession of the Khilafat cause, two aspects of Congress politics became clearly exposed: the considerable power of the Muslims over Gandhi and Congress, and the ascendancy within the Muslim bloc of the more religiously oriented elements. Moreover, communal animosity was on the increase, caused by, and giving impetus to communal, riots and *shuddhi* and *tabligh* campaigns. Importantly too, the Hindu Mahasabha finally acquired leaders truly national in stature, such as Malaviya and Lajpat Rai. Finally, the *shuddhi* movement was effecting considerable collaboration between the Aryas and the orthodox. The scene was set for a strong and broad movement, and the Swami enthusiastically engaged himself in its promotion. His basic radicalism soon led to difficulties, but he retained his belief that the *sangathan* movement had a historic mission to fulfil, and he continued to support the Mahasabha until the organization hesitantly entered the political arena and thus thoroughly disillusioned him.

The cause of *sangathan* was in the Swami's mind always closely connected with the uplift of the untouchables. As his involvement in the Mahasabha diminished he made their cause 'the sole mission of his remaining life'.⁶ As the Mahasabha was very slow and reluctant to move in the direction of untouchable uplift, the Swami increasingly looked towards the Arya Samaj for initiative and leadership in that field. His radicalism in the fight for the untouchables remained undiluted over the years. Nothing less than the granting to the untouchables the full rights to Vedic ritual, to intermingling, to intermarriage, and to equality of education, could solve that most pressing problem and halt their exodus from Hinduism.

A question that must be asked is how far the Swami contributed to the growing communal tensions of the twenties. There are two sides to that question. Firstly, did the Swami consciously promote communal antagonism? No doubt, some of his writings about the Muslims expressed harsh and provocative judgments. But it is important to note that they were invariably written in response to writings or pronouncements of Muslims which either vehemently attacked Hinduism, the Arya Samaj, and the Swami himself, or which supported methods such as *hijrat*, the killing of apostates, and the use of unfair and devious means of propaganda. Moreover, although the Swami's indictment of these Muslim tactics was vehement, he himself never advocated unfair, underhand, or

violent methods. It is also worth repeating that at a time when some communal propagandists—Arya, Hindu, and Muslim—resorted to vile slander, vicious innuendo, and sexual satire, the Swami never stooped to that gutter-propaganda of character assassination.⁹

Nevertheless, the pronouncements and writings of the Swami no doubt contributed to communal tension, even if such was not his intent. Shradhdhananda was never a man to carefully weigh his words and agonize about their possible impact. When deeply convinced of a cause and its rightness, he spoke out plainly, and rushed into print. His passion carried him away on the public platform and at his desk, and it was not in his nature to ponder what effect his emotional words might have on his audience or his readers. He was too absorbed in his own idealism to realize that for most people causes are not lofty and simple, but rather mixed with many other aspirations and pressures, be they personal, sectional, or even unworthy. The Swami's head was sometimes too high in the clouds to be aware of the great complexity of the pressures that besieged ordinary mortals, who were not as independent as he was. At times he does not seem to have realized how his fiery enthusiasm for great causes might be used for far lesser ends by more down-to-earth practitioners of communal or sectional politics.

Shradhdhananda's views of his time and its problems were very individualistic, and always markedly differed from those of the leaders with whom he collaborated. Yet their interest does not only lie in their being the views of an extraordinary historic personality. His pronouncements and his writings, though they may be considered ephemeral in the long stretch of history, reached a considerable sympathetic audience in those days. The ordinary Hindus and Muslims of the twenties became increasingly involved in politics and interested in political discussion. Their staple fare was not the English press or the pronouncements of Congressmen. They were much more influenced by the growing vernacular press and literature. It was primarily through the vernacular that the Swami propagated his ideas. His Hindu and Urdu articles in the *Sad-dharmprachārak*, the *Vijay*, the *Shradhdhā*, the *Tej*, and the *Arjun*, and his vernacular pamphlets often appearing in both languages, reached a wide circle of readers and filtered through to the masses. The study of the Swami's ideas gives us a wider understanding

of those influences the Hindus of that time were exposed to, and which they absorbed to some degree. One may judge these ideas as somewhat simplistic, partisan, or exaggerated. That does not change the fact that they were current and had their impact on the Hindu masses of North India at a crucial time when their role in political decision-making was on the increase.

Swami Shraddhananda's temperament, endeavours, and achievements, were in many ways very different from those of the founder of the Arya Samaj, Swam. Dayananda Sarasvati. But two important aspects of their approach to life were very similar. Both were driven by high and demanding ideals, to which they dedicated themselves without reservation. And both were men of action, not simply in the sense that they themselves laboured relentlessly, but also in the sense that they realized and strongly propagated the idea that action—moral, responsible, and dedicated action—constitutes the highest nobility and duty of *homo religiosus*. For neither of these great men was religion ever a reason or an excuse for escaping from this world, but it was rather their deepest motive for totally involving themselves in the betterment of society. Thus Swami Shraddhananda realized in his long life the central message of the founder of the Arya Samaj

Notes and References

INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER I

The ups and downs of a misspent youth

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3. Cf. J.T.F. Jordens, *Dayananda Sarasvati. His Life and Ideas*, O.U.P., 1978, ch. I.
4. This chapter is wholly based on the first section of Munshiram's autobiography, *Kalyān Mārg kā Pāthik*, pp. 12-64. References are given only where they seem useful, and are taken from the edition by the Sarvadeshak Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi, n.d.
5. AUTO, p. 14.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., p. 18.
9. Ibid., p. 22.
10. Ibid., p. 21.
11. Ibid., p. 26.
12. Ibid., p. 27.
13. Ibid., p. 22.
14. Ibid., p. 27.
15. Ibid., pp. 34-5.
16. Ibid., pp. 35-6.
17. Ibid., p.41
18. Ibid., p. 45.
19. Ibid., p. 27.
20. Ibid., p. 43.
21. Ibid., p. 46.
22. Ibid., p. 50.
23. Ibid., pp. 51-4.
24. Ibid., p. 55.
25. Ibid., p. 56.

26. Ibid., p. 58
27. Ibid., p. 61.
28. Ibid., p. 63.
29. Ibid., p. 64.

CHAPTER II

Conversion, and gradual ascent to leadership, 1884-93.

1. AUTO, p. 118.
2. Ibid., p. 84.
3. Ibid., p. 66, Satyadeva Vidyasankar, *Lālā Devrāj ji*, Delhi, 1935, pp. 22-3
4. AUTO, pp. 65-6.
5. Ibid., p. 67.
6. Ibid., p. 69.
7. *Lālā Devrāj*, pp. 21-5.
8. BIO, p. 84.
9. AUTO, pp. 69-70.
10. Ibid., pp. 70-1
11. Ibid., pp. 74-5.
12. Ibid., p. 76.
13. Ibid., pp. 88-90.
14. Ibid., p. 91.
15. BIO, p. 130.
16. AUTO, p. 75.
17. K W Jones, *Arya Dharm, Hindu Consciousness in 19th Century Punjab*, Univ. of Calif Press, Berkeley, 1976, p. 110.
18. AUTO, p. 87; *Lālā Devrāj*, p. 35.
19. AUTO, p. 94.
20. Ibid., pp. 85-6.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid., pp. 86-7
23. *Arya Dharm*, p. 109.
24. AUTO, pp. 99-100.
25. Ibid., p. 90.
26. HIST I, p. 180.
27. Ibid., p. 181; PAPS, p. 16.
28. AUTO, pp. 100-2.
29. Ibid., p. 72.
30. Ibid., pp. 97-8.
31. Ibid., p. 78.
32. For biographical details on Pandit Gurudatta, cf. the biographical sketch by Lala Jivan Das that accompanies the second edition of the writings of Gurudatta *The Works of Late Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi, M.A.*, with a biographical sketch, Lahore, 1902.

33. HIST I, p. 217
34. AUTO, pp. 96, 110.
35. Ibid., p. 100.
36. *Pandit Guru Datta*, p. (30).
37. PITA, p. 3.
38. AUTO, p. 105; *The Tribune*, 14 April 1888.
39. AUTO, p. 108; INCO, p. 20, *The Tribune*, 30 May 1888
40. AUTO, p. 104.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., p. 105.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid., p. 109.
45. Ibid., p. 107
46. Ibid., p. 110
47. Ibid., pp. 110-11
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid., p. 112.
50. Ibid., p. 113.
51. Ibid., p. 117
52. Ibid., p. 116.
53. *Arya Dharm*, p. 167
54. AUTO, p. 117
55. Ibid. pp. 116-17.
56. The story of the split of the Arya Samaj in the Panjab has been told in the following works PAPS, *passim*; K. W. Jones, 'The Arya Samaj in the Punjab - a study of social reform and religious revivalism, 1877-1902'. unpubl. Ph.D thesis, Univ of Calif, Berkeley, 1966. ch. IV, Shri Ram Sharma *Mahatma Hansraj. Maker of the Modern Punjab*, 2nd ed., Una, 1965, ch. V, HIST I, pp. 202 ff.
57. *Arya Dharm*, p. 167
58. Ibid., p. 124.
59. Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj, an account of its origin, doctrines, and activities, with a biographical sketch of the founder*, London, 1915, p. 108.
60. AUTO, p. 118.
61. Ibid., p. 121
62. Ibid., p. 120.
63. Ibid., p. 122.
64. Ibid., p. 120.
65. Shri Ram Sharma, pp. 57-60.
66. HIST I, pp. 203-4, AUTO, p. 124.
67. AUTO, p. 122.
68. HIST I, p. 215.
69. Ibid., p. 2.6.
70. *Arya Dharm*, pp. 126-7.
71. Ibid., p. 91, note 67.
72. PAPS, pp. 110-11; BIO, p. 224.
73. Shri Ram Sharma, p. 62.
74. *Arya Dharm*, p. 170.

75. For Lekhrām's biography cf. Munshiram's *Āryapathik Lekhrām*, and Rajendra Jigyasu, *Rakt Sākshī P Lekhrām*. Delhi, 1978.
76. AUTO, pp. 132, 134, 138, 140.
77. Ibid., p. 133.
78. Ibid., pp. 140-1.
79. *Āryapathik*, p. 79.
80. AUTO, p. 141.
81. Mul Raj, R. B., *Beginning of Punjabi Nationalism, Autobiography of R B Mul Raj*, Hoshiarpur, 1975, p. 206.
82. *Arya Dharm*, p. 170.
83. Ibid., p. 170, note 2.
84. J. Reid Graham, 'The Arya Samaj as a Reformation in Hinduism with special reference to caste', unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, Yale Univ., 1942, p. 406, note 1.
85. Shri Ram Sharma, p. 68.
86. *Āryapathik*, p. 84.
87. *Arya Dharm*, pp. 92-3.
88. *Āryapathik*, pp. 90-1. BIO, pp. 233-4 PAPS, pp. 117-18. Naradeva Shastri, *Āryasamāj kā Itihās*, vol II Allahabad, 1919, pp. 203-25.
89. Shri Ram Sharma, pp. 66-8.
90. SVNP, 1893, p. 650, the supplement was dated 21 Nov. 1893.
91. BIO, p. 176.
92. *The Tribune*, 2 Dec. 1891.
93. V.C. Joshi, ed., *Lajpat Rai, Autobiographical Writings*, Delhi, 1965, p. 60.
94. AUTO, p. 134.
95. Ibid.
96. BIO, pp. 180ff.
97. Munshiram, *Varnavyavasthā*, Jullundur, 1891, p. 16.
98. Ibid., p. 54.
99. Ibid., p. 63.
100. Munshiram, *The Future of the Arya Samaj*, Lahore, 1893, p. 6.
101. Ibid., p. 17.
102. *The Tribune*, 2 June 1890.
103. INCO, pp. 21-8.
104. HIST I, p. 200.
105. *Lālā Devrāj*, pp. 44-5.
106. *Arya Dharm*, p. 105.
107. *The Tribune*, 28 Oct. 1893.

CHAPTER III

Radical leader's see-saw of initiatives and disenchantments, 1894-1901

1. AUTO, p. 141
2. Cf. Shri Ram Sharma, *Mahatma Hansraj* . . . pp. 67-8, PAPS, p. 138, K W Jones, *Arya Dharm* . . . pp. 172-3.

3. Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj* . . . , p. 70, J Reid Graham, 'The Arya Samaj . . .', p. 410, *Golden Jubilee Commemoration Volume of the Sain Das A.S. High School*, pp. 27-8.
4. BIO, p. 242.
5. Cf. Rai Thakurdas Dhawan, *Vaidik Dharmprachār*, Lahore, 1896, *Arya Dharm*, p. 189.
6. HIST II, p. 3.
7. Munsharam, *Āryapathik Lekhrām*, p. 105.
8. PITA, p. 36.
9. *Āryapathik*, pp. 122 ff., 134
10. BIO, p. 258. *The Tribune*, 3 April 1896.
11. Example in *The Tribune*, 10 Aug. 1895.
12. For extracts, cf PAPS, pp. 97-8
13. *The Tribune*, 28 March 1894.
14. *Ibid.*, 6 Feb. 1895
15. *Arya Dharm*, p. 215.
16. *The Indian Social Reformer*, 18 Nov 1917.
17. PAPS, p. 99.
18. *Arya Dharm*, p. 216.
19. BIO, p. 243
20. PAPS, p. 184, *Arya Dharm*, p. 187.
21. *The Tribune*, 7 April 1897, pp. 317-18
22. SVNP, 1897, pp. 317-18.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 442.
24. PAPS, p. 135.
25. BIO, p. 250; PAPS, p. 136.
26. *Sain Das A.S. High School*, p. 29
27. *The Tribune*, 24 and 27 Nov., 1 Dec., 1897.
28. PAPS, pp. 137-8.
29. SVNP, 1898, p. 115, *Bhārat Sevak*, 7 Feb. 1898
30. *Ibid.*, p. 130-1, *Arya Gazette*, 17 Feb. 1898.
31. Graham, pp. 473-4.
32. HIST I, p. 200.
33. PAPS, pp. 296 ff.
34. Graham, pp. 477-87
35. *The Tribune*, 27 Nov 1897
36. HIST I, p. 288
37. *Ibid.*, p. 289
38. BIO, p. 260. PAPS, p. 183.
39. BIO, p. 271; PITA, p. 26.
40. SVNP, 1901, p. 481; *Bhārat Pratāp*, April 1901
41. HIST I, p. 289
42. SVNP, 1901, p. 732; *Ārya Patrikā*, 16 Nov 1901
43. BIO, p. 273
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 274-5.
45. SVNP, 1897, p. 324.
46. *Ibid.*, throughout the March reports.
47. *Ibid.*, pp. 209, 224, 317, 318, 347, 441, 546.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 478.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 600.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 676.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 938.
52. SVNP, 1898, p. 756.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 414, 445, 506. The accusations about Munshiram's treatment of Lekhram's widow are hard to believe, because of the excellent relations between them up to her premature death in 1902, and because of the fact that she donated Rs 2,000 to the Gurukul. Munshiram wrote a lengthy account of the widow's life in his introduction to the publication of Lekhram's works called *Kulliyāt-i Ārya Mustafīr*.
54. SVNP, 1900, pp. 52-3, SVNP, 1901, p. 134.
55. SVNP, 1900, p. 81.
56. SVNP, 1898, pp. 115, 676, 1899, p. 378.
57. Graham, p. 489.
58. PAPS, p. 210.
59. SVNP, 1900, p. 304.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 332.
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 376, 379-81.
62. Graham, p. 493.
63. Cf. Munshiram, ed., *Judgment in P. Gopi Nath Complainant against 1) Lala Munshi Ram, 2) Lala Wazir Chand, and 3) Lala Basti Ram accused*, Jullundur, n.d. In 1901 Munshiram published an extensive account of this affair, entitled *Saddharmprachārak par Pahilā Libel Case*, Jullundur, 1901.
64. SVNP, 1901, p. 599.
65. PITA, pp. 51-3. The sorry details of this quarrel with Devraj and the Jullundur Arya Samaj were later recounted by Munshiram in his book *Dukhī Dīl ki Purdard Dastān*, Jullundur, 1906, App. 2.
66. BIO, p. 273.
67. SVNP, 1897, p. 801.
68. BIO, p. 279.
69. Cf. p. 50 of this chapter.
70. *Arya Dharm*, p. 228.
71. PAPS, p. 234; HIST II, p. 5.
72. The following is a summary of the contents of *The Rules and the Scheme of Studies of the Gurukula, sanctioned by the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, together with an Introduction by Lala Ralla Ram, Lahore, 1902*.
73. Munshiram, ed., *Prospectus of the Gurukula Mahavidyalaya, Gurukul Kangri, 1910*, PAPS, p. 251.
74. *The Rules*, p. 16.
75. *Ibid.*
76. For the following paragraphs, cf. BIO, pp. 282-9.
77. Munshiram, *Kshātra Dharm Pālan kā Gair-māmuli Mankā*, Jullundur, 1895.
78. Lekhram, *Mahārshi Dayānand Sarasvatī kā Jīvan Charitra*, Lahore, 1897. Hindi translation by Kaviraj Raghunandansingh 'Nirmal', ed. Pandit Harischandra Vidyānkar, Delhi, 1972.
79. *Ibid.*, Hindi ed., p. 15.

80. *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.
81. Munshiram, *Subeh-o-Mid*, Lahore, 1898.
82. Munshiram, *Purāṇon kī nāpak talim se bacho*, Jullundur, 1899. Translated into Hindi by Pandit Suryaprasad Sharma, Muradabad, 1900.
83. *Ibid.*, Hindi ed., p. 85.
84. Munshiram, *Upadesh Manjarī*, Lahore, n.d.
85. Munshiram, *Ārya Saṅgītamāla*, Jullundur, 1900.
86. In 1901 Munshiram also wrote *Saddharmaprachāraḥ par Pahlā Libel Case*, Jullundur, 1901, of this chapter p. 53.
87. Cf. N.G. Barner, 'The Arya Samaj and Congress Politics in the Punjab, 1894–1908', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 26 (1967), pp. 363–79.
88. INCO, p. 30.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
90. SVNP, 1900, pp. 544–5, 625, 684, 1901, pp. 95, 130, 459, 684.
91. SVNP, 1901, p. 95.
92. PITA, p. 53.
93. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
94. *Ibid.*, p. 59. In his *Duchī Dil* . . . pp. 93 ff. Munshiram later recounted how he became disenchanted with the law because he felt that often natural justice suffered in the court. By mid-1899 he had practically wound up his practice.

CHAPTER IV

Gurukul Kangri: a dream come true, 1902–17

1. Article of C.F. Andrews in *Modern Review*, 13 (March 1913), p. 332.
2. INDRA, p. 10.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Gangaram Pathak, *Gurukul Kāngri kā Itihās (1902–1937)*, n.p., n.d., pp. 32–3.
5. INDRA, p. 12.
6. Munshiram, *The Quinquennial Report of the Gurukula Academy*, Lahore, 1907.
7. PITA, p. 96.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 95–103.
9. Pathak, pp. 17–18, Naradev Shastri, *Atmakathā arthāt Apbīti, Jagbīti*, Jwalapur, 1957, pp. 35–7.
10. Shastri, pp. 41–2.
11. HIST II, p. 68, PITA, pp. 156–9, Satyadeva Vidyalanekar, *Jivan Sangarsh*, Delhi, 1964, p. 76.
12. BIO, p. 329, PAPS, p. 339.
13. BIO, pp. 329–30.
14. PITA, pp. 163 ff.
15. *Jivan Sangarsh*, pp. 83–4.
16. BIO, p. 334.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 329 ff.
18. Naradev Shastri, p. 276.
19. Cf. the Gurukul annual reports edited by Munshirama listed in the bibliography.
20. BIO, p. 323.

21. PAPS, pp. 348-9.
22. The original Hindi text of this address was acquired from the Gandhi Memorial Museum, Delhi.
23. PITA, p. 176.
24. Cf. annual reports under note 19, and BIO, p. 328.
25. PITA, p. 114.
26. BIO, p. 320.
27. PITA, p. 102.
28. For an analysis of these figures, cf. J. Reid Graham, 'The Arya Samaj', pp. 432, 442. Detailed figures can be consulted in *Census of India, 1911*, vol. I, pt II, Tables, *Census of India, 1921, India*, vol. I, pt II, Tables; also vol. XV, *Punjab and Delhi*, pt I, and vol. XVI *United Provinces*, pt I.
29. HIST II, p. 68.
30. PAPS, pp. 317-18.
31. BIO, p. 421.
32. HIST II, p. 44.
33. BIO, p. 422.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 425.
35. J. Reid Graham, 'The Arya Samaj as a Reformation in Hinduism', Yale Univ., 1942, pp. 426-7. The Paropkarini Sabha had been founded by Swami Dayananda as the body that would take care of his Press and the publication of his works after his death. For the details, cf. J.T.F. Jordens, *Dayananda Sarasvati* . . . , pp. 215-17.
36. HIST II, pp. 45-6.
37. BIO, pp. 426-9.
38. Cf. Ch. III, p. 49.
39. Quoted in R.B. Mul Raj, *Beginnings of Punjabi Nationalism* . . . , Hoshiarpur, 1975, pp. 208-9.
40. Munshiram, *Veda aur Ārya Samāj*, Gurukul Kangri, 1916.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-2.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
48. Munshiram, ed., *Rishi Dayānand kā Patravṛyavahār*, vol. 1, Gurukul Kangri, 1916.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
50. Munshiram, *Ādim Satyārthprakāsh aur Ārya Samāj ke Siddhānt*, Delhi, 1917.
51. Cf. J.T.F. Jordens, *Dayananda Sarasvati*, pp. 99-102.
52. *Ādim Satyārthprakāsh*, Introduction.
53. *Ibid.*
54. Cf. N.G. Barner, 'The Arya Samaj and Congress politics in the Punjab, 1894-1908', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 26(1967), pp. 363-79.
55. SYNUP, 1902, p. 429.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 512.
57. SYNUP, 1903, pp. 43-4.

58. SVNP, 1905, p. 35.
59. SVNP, 1902, p. 512.
60. SVNP, 1905, p. 217.
61. SVNP, 1902, p. 15.
62. SVNP, 1905, p. 204.
63. Government of India, Home Public Proceedings, Deposit, April 1904, No. 13
Question: Whether membership of the Arya Samaj is to be considered as a
bar to the conferment of a title on the person concerned.
64. SVNP, 1905, p. 263.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 389; SVNP, 1906, p. 172.
66. SVNP, 1906, pp. 19, 130.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
68. SVNP, 1905, p. 290.
69. SVNP, 1906, p. 67.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
71. SVNP, 1905, p. 250.
72. SVNP, 1907, p. 40.
73. Munshiram and Rama Deva, *The Arya Samaj and its Detractors a Vindication*,
Gurukul Kangri, 1910; henceforth referred to as VIN.
74. VIN II, p. 75.
75. For the background, cf. the two articles by N.G. Barrier listed in the biblio-
graphy
76. K W. Jones, *Arya Dharm...*, pp. 274-5.
77. VIN II, pp. 55 ff.
78. SVNUP, 1908, pp. 614, 670 1909, p. 289.
79. SVNP, 1907, p. 349, 1908, pp. 28, 39; SVNUP, 1910, p. 163.
80. SVNUP, 1908, pp. 944-5, 1910, pp. 877, 925.
81. SVNUP, 1908, p. 670, SVNP, 1907, p. 460.
82. Government of India, Home Department, Political B, July 1911, Nos 55- 8.
Book entitled 'The Arya Samaj and its Detractors A Vindication', by Munshi
Ram.
83. SVNP, 1907, p. 443.
84. *Ibid.*, p. 453.
85. SVNUP, 1908, p. 944.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 945.
87. SVNUP, 1908, p. 1002; 1909, p. 398.
88. Lahore speech Nov 1908, VIN II, p. 101
89. SVNUP, 1909, p. 654.
90. VIN II, p. 102.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 116.
92. SVNUP, 1908, p. 959.
93. *Ibid.*, p. 945.
94. VIN II, p. 107.
95. SVNP, 1907, p. 379.
96. *Panjabee*, 12 June 1907.
97. VIN II, p. 78.
98. For details, cf. VIN II, pp. 122-247
99. *Ibid.*, p. 231.

100. Ibid.
101. Ibid., pp. 233ff.
102. INCO, p. 38.
103. VIN II, p. 80.
104. Ibid., pp. 114, 119.
105. SVNUP, 1907, p. 442.
106. SVNUP, 1908, p. 84.
107. VIN II, p. 112.
108. SVNUP, 1908, p. 598.
109. VIN II, p. 120.
110. Ibid., pp. 107, 115.
111. Ibid., p. 109.
112. Cf. note 82 of this chapter.
113. *Arya Dharm*, p. 300.
114. *The Tribune*, 9 and 11 March 1913.
115. Gispert-Sauch, ed., *God's Word among Men*, Delhi, 1973, p. 75.
116. Correspondence between C F Andrews and Munshiram, Chaturvedi Papers, National Archives of India, Delhi. The letters are numbered in this collection. We refer to the letters by that number. For an analysis of this friendship and correspondence, cf. H. Tinker, *The Ordeal of Love, C F Andrews and India*, O.U.P., Delhi, 1979, especially ch. 1V.
117. Ibid., letter no. 32.
118. Ibid., letter no. 40.
119. Ibid., letter no. 63.
120. Ibid., letter no. 92.
121. Ibid., letter no. 136. Cf. Tinker p. 93.
122. Ibid., letter no. 65.
123. Quoted in Gispert-Sauch, p. 76.
124. BIO, pp. 350ff. M M. Seth. *High Officials on Arya Samaj and its Work*, Allahabad, 1917.
125. G. Thursby, 'Aspects of Hindu-Muslim Relations in British India: a Study of Arya Samaj activities, Government of India policies, and communal conflict in the period 1923-1928', unpubl. Ph. D. thesis, Duke Univ., 1972, p. 16.
126. BIO, p. 352.
127. BIO, pp. 368-73.
128. INDRA, p. 170, refers to the fact that Munshiram's elder daughter, Vedkumari, came to live in the Gurukul in 1912, after sixteen years of marriage. As there is no mention of widowhood, one wonders if something else broke up her marriage.
129. HIST II, pp. 27, 41.
130. INDRA, p. 15.
131. Ibid., p. 26.
132. Ibid., pp. 26, 142.
133. Ibid., p. 28.
134. Ibid., pp. 144-5.
135. Ibid., p. 151.
136. Ibid., p. 30.
137. Ibid., p. 37.

138. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.
139. Correspondence, letter no. 148.
140. *Ibid.*, letter no. 152.
141. *Ibid.*, letter no. 158.
142. Cf. Raja Mahendra Pratap, *My Life Story of Fifty Five Years (December 1886 to December 1941)*, Dehra Dun, 1947, pp. 36-9, 321
143. *Ibid.*, pp. 36, 39-40
144. INDRA, p. 152
145. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
146. V C Joshi, *Lajpat Rai, Autobiographical Writings*, Delhi, 1965, p. 206.
147. INDRA, p. 153.
148. Joshi, pp. 214-15. For a similar judgement, cf. Arun Chandra Guha, *First Spark of Revolution, The early phase of India's struggle for independence, 1900-1920*, Bombay 1971, p. 439, Dharmavira, *Lala Har Dayal and Revolutionary Movements of his Times*, New Delhi, 1970, pp. 227, 325.
149. *Ibid.*, p. 154.
150. *Śhraddhā*, 2 July 1920.
151. BIO, pp. 379-80.
152. INDRA, pp. 39-41.
153. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
154. BIO, pp. 380-1.
155. Cf. this chapter, pp. 69, 82.
156. Cf. this chapter p. 78.
157. Munshiram, *Āryapathik Lekhrām kā Jivanvrittānt*, Jullundur 1914.
158. Rajendra Jigyasu, *Rakt Sākshī P Lekhrām*, Delhi, 1978, pp. 10-15
159. *Āryapathik*, pp. 177-181
160. *Ibid.*, p. 200.
161. *Ibid.*, p. 211
162. Munshiram, *Aryon kī Nityakarm Paddhati*, Delhi, 1916.
163. Munshiram, *Pāñch Mahāyajon kī Vidhī*, Gurukul Kangri, 1916. *Vistār-pūrvak Sandhyā-Vidhī*, Delhi, 1916.
164. Munshiram, *Āchārānāchār aur Chhūt-Chhāt*, Delhi, 1916.
165. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.
166. Munshiram, *Īsāī Pakshpāt aur Ārya Samāj*, Gurukul Kangri, 1916.
167. J.N Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*, reprint, Delhi, 1967 (1st ed. 1914)
168. *Īsāī Pakshpāt*, p. 64.
169. Munshiram, *Pārsī Mat aur Vaidik Dharm*, Gurukul Kangri, 1916.
170. M Haug, *Essays on the Sacred Language, Writings, and Religion of the Parsis*, edited and enlarged by E.W. West, London, 1883
171. Munshiram, *Mānav Dharmashāstra tathā Shāsanapaddhati*, Gurukul Kangri, 1917
172. T E Holland, *The Elements of Jurisprudence*, O.U.P., 1880.
173. Munshiram, *Vedānikūl Sankshipt Manusmriti*, Gurukul Kangri, 1911

CHAPTER V

The call of Gandhi and politics, 1917-22.

1. From a letter of Munshiram to the President of the Panjab Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, reproduced in BIO, pp. 506-7
2. For these ceremonies, cf. Jadunath Sarkar, *A History of Dasnami Naga Sanyasis*, Allahabad, n.d., pp. 66-75.
3. BIO, pp. 451-2.
4. PITA, p. 195.
5. INDRA, p. 146.
6. BIO, pp. 455-63. During 1917 the Swami wrote a book about the area he had been living in, called *Uttarākhānd ki mahimā arthāt Garhwāl prāchīn aur arvāchīn jiske sath Kurukshetra Māhātmya bhī lagā diyā gayā*, Delhi, 1917. The book deals with the physical and human geography of the areas, and refers to their political and religious past. It is a very unremarkable compilation of quotations from the Gazetteers and one or two secondary sources.
7. HIST II, pp. 85-6.
8. BIO, p. 464.
9. PITA, p. 197.
10. HIST II, p. 23.
11. BIO, pp. 538-9.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 545-8.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 548-56.
14. PAPS, pp. 350-1.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 349.
16. INCO, p. 41.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-6.
20. PITA, p. 199.
21. Satyadeva Vidyalankar, *Jivan Sangarsh . . .* p. 96.
22. PITA, p. 198.
23. The main sources where the events of the Delhi Satyagraha are described in detail are the following. Shraddhananda's account: INCO, pp. 50-97, Indra's account: PITA, pp. 196-214, and in his booklet *Jivan ki Jhānkhyān (pratham bhāg), Dillīke ve Samarānīya bīs din*, Delhi, n.d., the account of Government in the file Political B, May 1919, nos 268-73. Proposals to intern Munshi Ram alias Swami Shraddhananda and Dr Ansari, an excellent study is D.W. Ferrel's 'The Rowlatt Satyagraha in Delhi', in R. Kumar, ed., *Essays in Gandhian Politics, The Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919*, O.U.P., 1971, pp. 189-235. This study has been most useful in our reconstruction.
24. PITA, p. 199.
25. INCO, p. 52.
26. *Ibid.* p. 53.
27. The satyagraha started earlier in Delhi than in the rest of the country on account of a breakdown in communication, due to which Delhi adhered to the previous date set

28. INCO, p. 60.
29. The story told here is based on the many sources indicated in footnote 23 of this chapter.
30. INCO, p. 48.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
32. Kumar, p. 135.
33. INCO, p. 54.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
35. Government of India file, Political B, May 1919, nos 268-73. Proposals to intern Munshi Ram abas Swami Shradhdhanand and Dr Ansari, p. 4.
36. *Ibid.*
37. INCO, p. 70.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 65, 67.
39. Cf. Ferrel, pp. 220-32.
40. G O.I file, p. 3.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 4, cf. also D.W. Ferrel, 'Delhi 1911-1922 Society and Politics in the New Imperial Capital of India', Ph.D thesis, A.N.U., 1969, pp 390, 398ff.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
43. INDRA, p. 147.
44. INCO, p. 44.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
48. *Shradhdhā*, 2 July 1920.
49. P Sitaramayya, *The History of the Indian National Congress (1885-1935)*, n.p., 1935, p. 293.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 299.
51. Quotations are our translations from the original Hindi text of the Swami's address, obtained from the Gandhi Memorial Museum, Delhi.
52. INCO, p. 103.
53. *Ibid.*, pp. 107-8.
54. *Ibid.*, pp. 109-13.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
56. Cf. note 51.
57. *Ibid.*
58. *Ibid.*
59. INCO, p. 114.
60. BIO, pp. 506-7.
61. *Shradhdhā*, 7 and 14 May 1920.
62. *Ibid.*, 13 Aug. and 14 Sept. 1920.
63. *Ibid.*, 17 Sept. 1920.
64. INCO, p. 136.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
69. *Ibid.*, pp. 160-1.

70. Ibid., p. 168.
71. Ibid., p. 169.
72. Ibid., p. 173
73. Ibid., p. 131, *Shraddhā*, 9 July 1920
74. INCO, p. 147
75. Ibid., pp. 153-5.
76. Swami Shraddhananda, *Jāti ke dīnon ko mat tyāgo arthāt 7 Karor dīnon kī rakshā*, Delhi, 1919.
77. Ibid., p. 72.
78. *Shraddhā*, 28 May 1920.
79. Ibid., 13 Aug., 14 and 17 Sept. 1920.
80. INCO, p. 135.
81. Ibid., p. 188
82. P.C. Bamfort, *Histories of the Non-Co-operation and Khilafat Movements*, Delhi, Govt. of India Press, 1925, p. 148. For the Muslim side of the story told in these pages, cf. F. Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims*, Cambridge U.P., 1974.
83. *Shraddhā*, 7 May 1920, cf. Robinson, p. 325. A.C. Niemeijer, *The Khilafat Movement in India 1919-1924*, The Hague, 1972, pp. 94-5, 103-4
84. Ibid., 8 Oct. 1920, cf. Robinson, p. 319
85. INCO, pp. 122-3, Cf also Niemeijer, pp. 94-5.
86. Ibid., p. 126.
87. Ibid., p. 137, cf. Niemeijer, p. 149
88. Ibid., p. 134, see also G. Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations . . .*, p. 149.
89. Ibid., p. 14
90. Cf. R.E. Miller, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala*, Bombay, 1976, pp. 124-47; G. Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations*, pp. 137ff. Niemeijer, pp. 132-5.
91. R.C. Majumdar, ed., *History and Culture of the Indian People vol. XI, Struggle for Freedom*, Bombay, 1969, p. 364.
92. BIO, p. 588.
93. INDRA, p. 149, for other expressions of similar Hindu suspicions, cf. Robinson, pp. 337-9
94. INCO, pp. 158-60; D.W. Ferrel in his 'Delhi, 1911-1922 . . .' shows how the Muslims dominated Delhi politics between 1920-2.
95. INCO, pp. 190-1
96. Swami Shraddhananda, *Bandī ghar ke vichitra anubhav*, Delhi, 1923, p.8.
97. B.S. Nijjar, *Panjab under the British rule (1849-1947)*, vol. II, 1902-32, New Delhi, 1974, p. 96.
98. *The Tribune*, 22 Sept 1922
99. Ibid., 26 Sept 1922
100. *Bandī ghar*, pp. 28-9.
101. Ibid., p. 41
102. R. Kumar, p. 321

CHAPTER VI

The Untouchables. 'Save the dying Race', 1923-6.

- 1 BIO, p. 598.

2. PITA, p. 261
3. *Leader*, 21 Jan. 1923.
4. BIO, p. 535.
5. INDRA, pp. 48-9.
6. INCO, p. 195.
7. PAPS, p. 372, HIST II, p. 62; *Leader*, 1 Feb. 1923.
8. *Leader*, 7 Feb. 1923, PAPS, p. 380, BIO, p. 581, HIST II, p. 62. G Thursby, 'Aspects of Hindu-Muslim Relations', p. 48.
9. *Leader*, 18 May 1923 G Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations*, pp. 145-7
10. For details, cf. *ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 151, PAPS pp. 400ff.
13. *Leader*, 23 Feb. 1923.
14. *Ibid.*, 3 and 26 March, 5 and 28 April 1923, Thursby, book, p. 152; for the Muslim reaction, cf F Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims*, pp. 338-9
15. *Leader*, 21 March 1923.
16. *Ibid.*, 21, 23 and 26 March, 30 April, 16 July, 3 Aug. 1923.
17. *Ibid.*, 29 March 1923.
18. *Ibid.*, 8 April 1923.
19. *Ibid.*, 5 and 6 May 1923.
20. *Ibid.*, 13 May 1923.
21. *Ibid.*, 5 April 1923.
22. *Ibid.*, 6, 16, and 22 April 1923
23. G. Thursby, book, pp. 152-3.
24. *Leader*, 24 March 1923.
25. Swami Shraadhnananda, *Hindu Sangathan* . . . , pp. 14-15.
26. Cf. Indra Prakash, *Hindu Mahasabha: its Contribution to India's Politics*, New Delhi, 1966; cf also Jürgen Lütt, 'Indian Nationalism and Hindu Identity, the beginnings of the Hindu Sabha Movement', unpublished paper, 1977
27. SVNUP, 1910, p. 925
28. J Lütt, pp. 3, 6, 7.
29. *Hindu Sangathan*, p. 114; also J Lütt, p. 6.
30. *Leader*, 1, 10, and 20 June, 11 and 30 July 1923.
31. *Ibid.*, 17 and 18 Aug. 1923.
32. *Ibid.*, 8 Aug. 1923.
33. ~~ibid.~~
34. *Ibid.*, 24 Aug. 1923.
35. *Ibid.*, 24 and 25 Aug. 1923
36. *Ibid.*, 30 Aug. 1923.
37. BIO, pp. 597-8.
38. *Leader*, 29 Aug. 1923.
39. R.C. Majumdar, ed., *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, vol. XI, *Struggle for Freedom*, Bombay, 1969, pp. 425-7, Niemeyer, pp. .60-2.
40. *Leader*, reports on 12 Sept. and 30 Oct. 1923.
41. *Ibid.*, 15 and 16 Sept. 1923.
42. *Hindu-Muslim Itihād kī Kahānī*, Delhi, 1924, our references are to that work as included in *Kalyān Sannyāsī*, pp. 441-80.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 478.

44. Ibid., pp. 480-1
45. M.R. Jayakar, *The Story of my Life*, vol. II, 1922-5, New York, 1959, p. 157
46. G. Thursby, book, p. 157.
47. Jayakar, p. 157
48. *Leader*, 6 Oct. 1923.
49. Ibid., 19 Sept. 1923.
50. Ibid., 1 Oct. 1923.
51. *Hindus Sāvadhān, tumhāre Dharm-dārg par rātri men chipkar dhāvā bolā gayā*, the second edition, to the Hindi translation of which we here refer, was retitled *Khatāre kā Ghantā arthāt Muhammadi Shadyantra kā Rahasyabhed*, Delhi, 1926.
52. Ibid., Preface to the first edition; for Khwaja Haasan Nizami, cf. G. Thursby, book, 36-7, 156, Ram Babu Saksena, *A History of Urdu Literature*, Allahabad, 1940, p. 343
53. Ibid., Preface to the first edition.
54. Ibid., p. 2. This rumour had been spread in Delhi soon after the Swami became involved in the *shuddhi* campaign. Cf. G. Thursby, book, p. 173.
55. Ibid., pp. 4-5.
56. Ibid., pp. 62-7
57. *Leader*, 14 Nov. 1923.
58. INCO, p. 188.
59. *Leader*, 12 Nov., 23 Dec. 1923
60. Ibid., 8 Feb. 1924.
61. *Vartamān Mukhya Samasyā. Achhūtpan ke kalank ko dūr karō*, Delhi, 1924
62. Ibid., p. .2.
63. Ibid., p. 15.
64. Ibid., p. .6.
65. Ibid., p. 17.
66. Ibid., pp. 18-19.
67. *Leader*, 30 April 1924.
68. Ibid., 5 May 1924.
69. Ibid.
70. The article is reproduced in M. K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. XXIV, Allahabad, 1967, pp. 136-54.
71. Ibid., p. 145.
72. Ibid.
73. *Leader*, 11, 12, 13, 15, 23, and 27 June 1924.
74. M.K. Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. XXIV, pp. 180, 215, 228, 365.
75. *Leader*, 13 June 1924.
76. Cf. BIO, pp. 568-73 for details
77. *Leader*, 5 May 1924.
78. Ibid., 9 May 1924.
79. Ibid., 12 May 1924.
80. Ibid., 11 and 12 May 1924.
81. Ibid., 14 May 1924.
82. Ibid., 15, 19 and 23 May 1924
83. Ibid., 8 June 1924
84. Ibid., 27 June 1924.

85. Ibid.
86. *Hindu-Muslim Itihād ki Kahāni*, Delhi, 1924
87. *Khātare kā Ghantā* Our references are to the Hindi translation, of this chapter, note 51
88. M. K. Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. XXIV, pp. 297-8.
89. Ibid., p. 146.
90. *Khātare kā Ghantā*, p. 74.
91. Ibid., pp. 81-2.
92. *Leader*, 18 Sept. 1924. The publication was *Andhā etiḥād aur khufiyā jihād*, Delhi, 1924. We refer to the reproduction of this work in *Kalyān Samyān*, pp. 297-440.
93. Ibid., pp. 298, 301
94. Ibid., p. 303.
95. Ibid., p. 363.
96. Ibid., p. 386.
97. Von Hammer, *The History of the Assassins*, translated from the German by Oswald Charles Wood, M.D., etc., with an introduction by Swamī Shradhdhanand. Reprint, Banaras, 1926.
98. R.C. Majumdar, *Struggle for Freedom*, pp. 428ff., for a study of the Hindu-Muslim conflicts during this period, cf. G. Thursby, book, ch. III
99. *The Indian Quarterly Register*, ed. H.N. Mitra, 1924, vol. II, p. 147.
100. Ibid., pp. 149-60.
101. *Leader*, 1 Oct. 1924.
102. Ibid.
103. *Hindu Sangathan, Saviour of the Dying Race*, Delhi, March 1926; the preface is dated 20 Nov. 1924.
104. Ibid., p. 131
105. Ibid.
106. Ibid., p. 136.
107. Ibid., p. 137
108. Ibid., p. 138.
109. Ibid., p. 139
110. *Leader*, 9 March 1925.
111. Ibid., 7, 14 and 19 March 1926.
112. Mahadev H. Desai, *Day-to-Day with Gandhi, Secretary's Diary*, vol. V, Banaras, 1970, p. 99.
113. *Indian Quarterly Register*, 1925, vol. I, pp. 377-82
114. *Leader*, 14 April 1925.
115. BIO, p. 606.
116. Ibid., pp. 604-7.
117. *Leader*, 27 June 1925.
118. Ibid., 7 Oct. 1925.
119. *Indian Quarterly Register*, 1925, vol. II, pp. 348-54.
120. *Leader*, 4 March 1926.
121. Ibid., 15 March 1926.
122. Ibid., 20 March 1926.
123. Ibid., 15 and 31 March, 2 April 1926.
124. *Indian Quarterly Register*, 1926, vol. I, pp. 397-408.

125. *Leader*, 14 and 15 May 1926.
126. *Liberator*, 23 Sept. 1926, quoted in BIO, pp. 607-9.
127. *Leader* 21 March, 14 June, 5 Dec. 1925, 4 and 24 April 1926.
128. *Vartamān Mukhya Samasyā*, p. 19.
129. *Leader*, 1 Oct., 1924.
130. BIO, pp. 579-81
131. Raghuvir Singh Shastri, *Sārvadeshik Ārya Pratidinhi Sabhā kā Sankshipt Itihās*, Delhi, 1961, p. 12
132. Cf J I F Jordens, *Dayānanda Sarasvatī*, ch. II
133. Cf *Leader* from 16 to 27 Feb. 1925.
134. *Ibid.*, 2 April 1925.
135. *Ibid.*
136. BIO, p. 623.
137. *Ibid.*, p. 624.
138. *Ibid.*, pp. 625-6.
139. *Ibid.*
140. *Ibid.*, p. 629.
141. *Leader*, 15 Oct. 1925.
142. BIO, pp. 630-1
143. *Leader*, 2 Oct. 1925.
144. BIO, p. 578, an example of a vile attack upon the Swami is reproduced in G. Thursby, book, pp. 36-7
145. *Leader*, 19 Nov 1925.
146. *Arya*, Feb. 1926, p. 46.
147. *Leader*, 5 April 1926.
148. *Ibid.*, 4 April 1926.
149. BIO, p. 578.
150. *Mukti Sopān*, Lahore, 1925 ; republished in Delhi, 1958.
151. *Leader*, 2 Oct. 1926; BIO, pp. 633ff
152. *Leader*, 2 Dec 1926.
153. BIO, p. 635. PITA, p. 291.
154. R.C. Majumdar *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, vol. III, Calcutta, 1963, pp. 258-9.
155. INDRA, p. 57
156. Cf G Thursby, thesis, p. 56. book, p. 155.
157. *Leader*, 14 Nov. 1926.
158. PITA, p. 269.
159. *Leader*, 21 Nov 1926.
160. INDRA, p. 57
161. BIO, p. 638.
162. For the story of that last day, of BIO, pp. 639ff, PITA, pp. 283ff.
163. BIO, p. 598.

CONCLUSION

1. PITA, p. 267
2. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 267.
4. V.C. Joshi, ed., *Lajpat Rai: Autobiographical Writings*, Delhi, 1965, p. 60.
5. PITA, p. 267
6. Joshi, p. 60.
7. M.K. Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. xxiv, p. 145.
8. *Leader*, 7 Feb. 1923.
9. For an idea of the intensity of these writings, cf. G. Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations in British India*, Leiden, 1975, ch. 2, and N.G. Barrier, *Banned, Controversial Literature and Political Control in British India, 1907-1947*, Delhi, 1976

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B. Correspondence

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Note

Some of the very imperfect and incomplete bibliographies of the Swami's works published in Arya Samaj journals refer to works not contained in this bibliography. Some of these are in fact reprints of articles of the Swami published elsewhere. For instance the booklet entitled *Religious Intolerance*, is a reprint of Shraddhananda's introduction to Von Hammer's *History of the Assassins, Vaidik Ādarsh* (Muzaffarnagar, 1940) is a selection of devotional articles from the *Saddharmprachārak*; and there were publications in Urdu of part of his Autobiography like *Merī Zindagī ke Nasheb-o-Pharaz*. There are also a couple of minor pamphlets occasionally mentioned which we have not been able to track down in any library:

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Ek māns prachārak mahāpurush kī gupt līlā kā prakāsh (1895?)

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